# New Materials

Take notes here…

New developments regarding the nuclear war advantage

The Chinese Opacity Advantage (and how to structure a 1AC)

The Aff’s “Say No” Trick (and how to answer it)

The relationship between Taiwan, the SCS, the ECS, and Okinawa (look at a map)

How to answer the “China-Taiwan War” turn

Debating Defensive Realism yes/no

The Democracy DA

The Threaten Normalization CP

The Debt Add-A-Condition CP

The Trump DA – Links? How might it turn the case?

# Activity

## Format/Explanation

1. Review and pre-flow the 1AC.

2. Review and pre-flow the 1NC. Add four analytical arguments to the Nuclear War Advantage Frontline. Add two analytical arguments and two more cards to the Chinese Opacity Advantage Frontline.

3. Prepare to deliver a 2AC against this 1NC. Appropriate prep time will be provided.

4. One student will be selected to deliver the 2AC. Everyone else will flow.

5. Students will be selected to extend particular positions from the 1NC against the 2AC that was delivered. Appropriate prep time will be provided.

## 1AC

### 1AC — Nuclear War Advantage (Longer)

#### Contention One: Nuclear War

#### First, the Taiwan Strait is a ticking time bomb. China and President Tsai are on a collision course that makes war extremely likely. The U.S. will be drawn-in.

Carpenter 16 — Ted Galen Carpenter, Senior Fellow for Defense and Foreign Policy Studies and former Director of Foreign Policy Studies at the Cato Institute, holds a Ph.D. in U.S. Diplomatic History from the University of Texas, 2016 (“America Should Step Back from the Taiwan Time Bomb,” *The National Interest*, July 6th, Available Online at http://nationalinterest.org/blog/the-skeptics/america-should-step-back-the-taiwan-time-bomb-16864?page=show, Accessed 07-11-2016)

Tensions between Taiwan and Mainland China rose another notch on July 1 when the Republic of China Navy accidentally launched a missile in the Taiwan Strait toward Mainland China. The supersonic Hsiung-feng III (“Brave Wind”) antiship missile flew some forty-five miles before striking a Taiwanese fishing trawler, killing the skipper and injuring three crew members.

Beijing’s initial reaction was relatively restrained. Although Chinese authorities immediately demanded a “responsible explanation” for the mishap, they did not take steps to shamelessly exploit the situation for propaganda purposes. Later that day, though, a spokesman for the Taiwan Affairs Office of the State Council charged that the incident “caused severe impact at a time when the mainland has repeatedly emphasized development of peaceful cross-strait relations.”

More fundamentally, the accident was yet another step in the deterioration of relations between Beijing and Taipei since the election of Democratic Progressive Party president and legislature. Chinese leaders were unhappy about the victory of the DPP’s Tsai Ing-wen as Taiwan’s new president, even though she was not as strident in her advocacy of formal independence for the island as the last DPP president, Chen Shui-bian, had been.

Even before she took office in May, Beijing warned Tsai and her supporters that they must accept the so-called 1992 consensus that there was one China, however much the two sides might disagree about the specific definition of that concept. And that attitude has not softened in the slightest. Zhang Zhijun, the head of the Taiwan Affairs Office, put it bluntly to a visiting Taiwanese business delegation in late May. “There is no future in Taiwan independence, and this cannot become an option for Taiwan’s future. This is the conclusion of history.” He added that “some people say you must pay attention to broad public opinion in Taiwan,” but he would have none of that reasoning. “Taiwan society ought to understand and attach great importance to the feelings of the 1.37 billion residents of the mainland.”

At first Tsai waffled, and then openly balked at accepting the 1992 consensus. Beijing’s irritation mounted quickly in response. In late June, barely a month after Tsai took office, China severed all liaison contacts between the Taiwan Affairs Office and its Taiwanese counterpart.

Rejecting the 1992 consensus was hardly Tsai’s only offense from Beijing’s standpoint. Allies of her administration have pushed Taiwan’s independent territorial claims in the South China Sea. She had embarked on an extremely conciliatory policy toward China’s archstrategic adversary, Japan. And in early June, Taiwan for the first time held a commemorative ceremony for the victims of the 1989 Tiananmen Square massacre. That was an especially bold thumb in the eye of Beijing’s authorities. And to top matters off, Taiwan will be testing its new antimissile systems in the United States later this month.

As the last item indicates, the United States is far more than a mere spectator to these developments. America has a loosely-defined but nonetheless real obligation to defend Taiwan under the 1979 Taiwan Relations Act. Washington also continues to sell weapons systems to Taipei. Beijing has complained about both aspects of this relationship, but that seemed little more than an exercise in pro forma diplomatic protests during the eight years that the conciliatory Ma Ying-jeou and the Kuomintang party governed Taiwan.

That period of stability has clearly come to an end, and the United States needs to reconsider the wisdom of its security commitment to Taiwan. Impatience on the part of Beijing, rash action on the part of pro-independence Taiwanese, or just a bad accident could trigger a crisis with devastating consequences for the United States. The latest incident highlights the danger. Imagine if the fishing trawler the Taiwanese missile struck had been from the mainland rather than Taiwan. Imagine if it had been a Chinese naval vessel that was struck. One suspects that Beijing’s response would have been a lot less restrained.

The Taiwan Strait is a ticking time bomb. The Taiwanese people seem ever more determined to chart their own destiny distinct from the mainland. The mainland authorities are determined that reunification will take place at some point, and their patience is not inexhaustible. It’s hard to see how this turns out well, and unless the United States extricates itself from this increasingly dangerous commitment, it will be one of the casualties when the time bomb explodes.

#### Second, China is ramping up its “three warfares” campaign against Taiwan because Tsai won’t back down on the ’92 consensus. The risk of all-out war is high and rising.

Navarro 16 — Peter Navarro, Professor of Economics and Public Policy at the Merage School of Business at the University of California-Irvine, holds a Ph.D. in Economics and a Masters of Public Administration from Harvard University, 2016 (“China Won't Budge, and Taiwan Won't Back Down,” *The National Interest*, July 15th, Available Online at <http://nationalinterest.org/blog/the-buzz/china-wont-budge-taiwan-wont-back-down-16985?page=show>, Accessed 07-16-2016)

Since Taiwan’s new president Tsai Ing-wen gave her inaugural address on May 20 and refused to publicly embrace the principle of “One China, Two Systems”, China has significantly escalated its nonkinetic “three warfares” campaign against Taiwan in an effort to bring the “renegade province” to heel. This campaign involves a “legal warfare” kerfuffle over an alleged “1992 consensus,” a deeply-wounding economic warfare involving highly targeted and politically sophisticated trade quotas, and a Cold War-style psychological war that includes the severing of key communication links and diplomatic ties between Taiwan and the mainland.

With boots on the ground in Taiwan interviewing key stakeholders, I have found this situation to be significantly worse than is being reported in the western press. The deteriorating situation is further complicated by the fact that China and Taiwan appear destined to move further and further apart over time as Beijing takes an even more authoritarian turn and Taipei sees a thousand sunflowers bloom.

At this delicate and precarious point, the fundamental question explored in installment two of this series is whether a kinetic war can be avoided if Taiwan refuses to bend to Beijing’s will. The answer to that question will in large part hinge on the behaviors of Beijing, Taipei and Washington. To handicap how this is all likely to turn out politically and militarily, here’s what you may want to know.

Just as the United States is divided along “red state” Republican and “blue state” Democratic lines, Taiwan’s electorate is split between a “pan blue” coalition led by the conservative Kuomintang Party (KMT) that dates back to the days of Chiang Kai-shek and a “pan green” coalition led by the Democratic Progressive Party. While the KMT and DPP are split along fairly traditional conservative and liberal lines just as the American Republican and Democratic Parties are, the real differentiator in Taiwan politics is each of the party’s platforms on cross-strait relations with the People’s Republic of China.

For its part, the KMT has long embraced the “One China, Two Systems” policy favored by Beijing. From this philosophy has emerged deepening economic ties with China and at least the appearance of relative stability in the Taiwan Strait. The problem, however, is that an increasing majority of the people of Taiwan self-identify with being Taiwanese (over 70 percent and rising), and this supermajority has, over time, expressed less and less interest in unification with the mainland. There are two very powerful forces driving this trend—and driving the Taiwanese away from mainland control.

The first force is Beijing’s increasingly brutal subjugation of Hong Kong. Here, while Hong Kong was supposed to be a shining showcase of a successful “One China, Two Systems” world, Taiwan has instead witnessed Beijing’s manipulation of the Hong Kong electoral process, the arrest and kidnapping of dissidents, the quashing of all opposition and comically brutal spectacles like Chinese special forces kidnapping elderly booksellers deemed to be enemies of the state. With all of these authoritarian malignancies dutifully reported in publications like the Taipei Times and China Post, the well-read Taiwanese have increasingly said “no” to “one China,” much less “two systems.”

The second force driving a new Taiwanese cultural and national identity—and the fall of the House of the KMT—is pure economics. Put simply, the deepening cross-strait economic ties promoted by the KMT, particularly during the 2008–16 presidency of Ma Ying-jeou, has not resulted in a “trickle down” effect to the benefit of Taiwan’s middle and working classes. Instead, most of the wealth associated with cross-strait trade effectively, an offshoring of much of Taiwan’s production to China—has accrued to the business and corporate power base of the KMT while both GDP growth and wage growth on the island has stagnated. Politically, the KMT has borne the brunt of its bad bet on the China trade as Taiwanese younger voters in particular have shunned the party like the plague.

Enter stage left the Democratic Progressive Party and its pan-green coalition. In the 2016 election, President Tsai Ing-wen crushed her KMT opponent, winning 56 percent of the vote compared to the 31 percent of the KMT’s Eric Chu. Alarmed, and as part of its escalation of “lawfare” against Taiwan, Beijing has been demanding that President Tsai adopt a highly disputed and tortured construct known as the “1992 Consensus” as a first principle of cross-strait relations.

Beijing’s view of this so-called 1992 Consensus is that is fully commits Taiwan to the “One China, Two Systems” principle, with the eventual goal of unification. The problem however, is that there are no historical facts to support the existence of such a “consensus.” Rather, the facts merely indicate that a semiofficial meeting took place in Singapore in 1992 between midlevel representatives of China and Taiwan, but there was no formal written agreement or even reference to a 1992 Consensus.

Instead, this term was coined in 2000 by another midlevel Chinese bureaucrat. It then took on a life of its own as the KMT leadership and President Ma embraced it. However, the DPP leadership has always rejected it, and former President Lee Teng-hui dismisses out of hand the claim any such “consensus” was agreed to during his presidency.

To Beijing, President Tsai rejection of any “1992 consensus” is no small matter. In the wake of the DPP’s victory and the refusal of President Tsai to acknowledge the alleged consensus, Beijing has taken a number of highly provocative three warfares steps that have turned a demonstration of the peaceful democratic transfer of presidential and party power in Taiwan into an emerging crisis.

On the economic warfare front, Beijing has cut tourism to Taiwan at a time when the Taiwanese economy is already struggling. This is the same tactic Beijing used against Japan during the 2012 Senkaku (or Diaoyu) Islands crisis and against the Philippines when Beijing seized Scarborough Shoal by force. In addition, Beijing has selectively cut its imports of politically powerful sectors like fish and farming in a sophisticated effort to pressure key political groups in Taiwan to pressure the DPP in turn.

On the psychological warfare front, China’s economic coercion certainly is part of Beijing’s “psy ops.” However, Beijing has also cut the “hotline” that exists between Beijing and Taipei along with normal diplomatic contacts.

As a further twist in this plot, and as part of its “divide and conquer” strategy, Beijing continues to communicate with KMT party leaders even as it shuns official government channels. The goal here appears to be to signal to the Taiwan people that if they want peace, they best favor the KMT. However, the KMT is playing a very dangerous game as this kind of show of disunity plays into the stereotype of the KMT as a Vichy-style collaborator with Beijing rather than as a vessel for the will of the people.

As for how all this will end, Beijing needs to realize that given the democratic forces now in full bloom in Taiwan, it is virtually impossible for President Tsai and the DPP to go against the express wishes of the electorate and cave in on the 1992 consensus. To do so would be the death knell of the DPP party. It would also throw the island into political chaos as the majority of voters would have no major party to vote for.

The broader danger here is that Beijing, egged on by hardliners, may decide that Taiwan can only drift further from its orb so this may be the best time to bring the issue to a traumatic “final resolution”—either by an even further escalation of its “three warfares” or an outright kinetic attack that would almost certainly draw the United States into the mix.

#### Third, Xi *can’t* back down — he’s politically vulnerable in the run-up to the 19th Party Congress.

Glaser and Vitello 15 — Bonnie S. Glaser, Senior Fellow with the Freeman Chair in China Studies and Senior Associate with the CSIS Pacific Forum at the Center for Strategic and International Studies, Member of the Council on Foreign Relations and the Institute of International Strategic Studies, holds an M.A. in International Economics and Chinese Studies from the School of Advanced International Studies at Johns Hopkins University, and Jacqueline Vitello, Research Associate and Program Coordinator in the Freeman Chair in China Studies at the Center for Strategic and International Studies, 2015 (“Xi Jinping's Great Game: Are China and Taiwan Headed Towards Trouble?,” *The National Interest*, July 16th, Available Online at <http://nationalinterest.org/feature/xi-jinpings-great-game-are-china-taiwan-headed-towards-13346?page=show>, Accessed 07-16-2016)

Taiwan’s presidential election is still six months away, but it seems increasingly likely that the Democratic Progressive Party (DPP)’s Tsai Ing-wen is going to win. In the latest TVBS public opinion poll on July 7, Tsai leads the Kuomintang (KMT)’s Hung Hsiu-chu 42 percent to 30 percent. Among the those closely watching the possible return of the DPP to power is the People’s Republic of China, which worries that if elected, Tsai will deny that the two sides of the Strait belong to one China and pursue de jure independence. This fear derives from Tsai’s past history as the creator of the “two states theory” in the Lee Teng-hui era as well as her current unwillingness to accept the existence of “one China” even as she pledges to maintain the status quo across the Taiwan Strait. Beijing could react harshly if Tsai is elected on January 16 as the next president of Taiwan, including by taking punitive economic measures, suspending communication and cooperation mechanisms, stealing away some of Taiwan’s diplomatic allies, or even using military coercion or force.

Xi Jinping’s reaction to a Tsai Ing-wen victory should not be underestimated. When it comes to sovereignty issues, the Chinese leader has shown little willingness to compromise. Since becoming General Secretary of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) in 2012, Xi has been sending tough signals to Taiwan, and these warnings have only intensified in the run up to the presidential elections on the island. As he continues to deepen the anti-corruption campaign and maneuvers to put his own supporters on the Standing Committee of the Politburo at the 19th CCP Congress in 2017, Xi is likely to prioritize protecting his flank. Appearing soft toward Taiwan could create a vulnerability for his opponents to exploit at a sensitive time.

#### Fourth, the risk of war will continue to increase because of Chinese military modernization.

Glaser 15 — Charles L. Glaser, Professor of Political Science and International Affairs and Director of the Institute for Security and Conflict Studies at the Elliott School of International Affairs at George Washington University, Fellow in the Kissinger Institute at the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars, former Emmett Dedmon Professor of Public Policy and Acting Dean at the Harris School of Public Policy at the University of Chicago, former Strategic Analyst for the Joint Staff in the Pentagon, holds a Ph.D. and a Master’s in Public Policy from the Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University, 2015 (“A U.S.-China Grand Bargain? The Hard Choice between Military Competition and Accommodation,” *International Security*, Volume 39, Number 4, Spring, Available Online to Subscribing Institutions via MIT Press Journals)

None of the above dangers is new, but others are. China's improved military capabilities may increase its willingness both to start and to escalate a Taiwan crisis. Fifteen years ago, China had little capability to invade or blockade Taiwan. Today it can begin to imagine successfully invading Taiwan, and its capability will only increase with time.63 Much of the concern about China's so-called antiaccess/area-denial (A2/AD) strategy focuses on its ability to reduce the U.S. ability to come to Taiwan's aid.64 In addition to its improved conventional capabilities, China is modernizing its nuclear forces to increase their survivability and their ability to retaliate following a large U.S. counter-nuclear attack.65 Arguably, the United States' current ability to destroy most or all of China's nuclear force enhances its bargaining position in a severe crisis or conventional war over Taiwan. Consequently, China's nuclear modernization may make China more willing to start a crisis, less willing to make compromises once conflict occurs, and more willing to escalate.

#### Fifth, any crisis over Taiwan will escalate quickly — nuclear war is likely.

Littlefield and Lowther 15 — Alex Littlefield, Assistant Professor in the Department of International Trade at Feng Chia University (Taiwan), holds a Ph.D. in International Politics from National Chung Hsing University (Taiwan), and Adam Lowther, Research Professor at the Air Force Research Institute at Maxwell Air Force Base, Director of the School of Advanced Nuclear Deterrence Studies at the Air Force Global Strike Command, former Assistant Professor of Political Science at Arkansas Tech University and Columbus State University, holds a Ph.D. in International Relations from the University of Alabama, 2015 (“Taiwan and the Prospects for War Between China and America,” *The Diplomat*, August 11th, Available Online at <http://thediplomat.com/2015/08/taiwan-and-the-prospects-for-war-between-china-and-america/>, Accessed 06-25-2016)

Possible Scenario

While there are several scenarios where conflict between the United States and China is possible, some analysts believe that a conflict over Taiwan remains the most likely place where the PRC and the U.S. would come to blows. Beijing is aware that any coercive action on its part to force Taiwan to accept its political domination could incur the wrath of the United States. To prevent the U.S. from intervening in the region, China will certainly turn to its anti-access/area-denial (A2/AD) strategy, beginning with non-lethal means and non-lethal threats to discourage the American public from supporting the use of force in support of Taiwan.

If thwarted in its initial efforts to stop Chinese aggression against Taiwan, the United States may be tempted to resort to stronger measures and attack mainland China. A kinetic response to a cyber-attack, for example, although an option, would very likely lead to escalation on the part of the Chinese. Given the regime’s relative weakness and the probability that American attacks (cyber and conventional) on China will include strikes against PLA command and control (C2) nodes, which mingle conventional and nuclear C2, the Chinese may escalate to the use of a nuclear weapon (against a U.S. carrier in China’s self-declared waters for example) as a means of forcing de-escalation.

In the view of China, such a strike would not be a violation of its no-first-use policy because the strike would occur in sovereign Chinese waters, thus making the use of nuclear weapons a defensive act. Since Taiwan is a domestic matter, any U.S. intervention would be viewed as an act of aggression. This, in the minds of the Chinese, makes the United States an outside aggressor, not China.

It is also important to remember that nuclear weapons are an asymmetric response to American conventional superiority. Given that China is incapable of executing and sustaining a conventional military campaign against the continental United States, China would clearly have an asymmetry of interest and capability with the United States – far more is at stake for China than it is for the United States.

In essence, the only effective option in retaliation for a successful U.S. conventional campaign on Chinese soil is the nuclear one. Without making too crude a point, the nuclear option provides more bang for the buck, or yuan. Given that mutually assured destruction (MAD) is not part of China’s strategic thinking – in fact it is explicitly rejected – the PRC will see the situation very differently than the United States.

China likely has no desire to become a nuclear peer of the United States. It does not need to be in order to achieve its geopolitical objectives. However, China does have specific goals that are a part of its stated core security interests, including reunification with Taiwan. Reunification is necessary for China to reach its unstated goal of becoming a regional hegemon. As long as Taiwan maintains its de facto independence of China it acts as a literal and symbolic barrier to China’s power projection beyond the East China Sea. Without Taiwan, China cannot gain military hegemony in its own neighborhood.

China’s maritime land reclamation strategy for Southeast Asia pales in scope and significance with the historical and political value of Taiwan. With Taiwan returned to its rightful place, the relevance to China of the U.S. military presence in Japan and South Korea is greatly diminished. China’s relationship with the Philippines, which lies just to the south of Taiwan, would also change dramatically.

Although China criticizes the United States for playing the role of global hegemon, it is actively seeking to supplant the United States in Asia so that it can play a similar role in the region. While Beijing may take a longer view toward geopolitical issues than Washington does, Chinese political leaders must still be responsive to a domestic audience that demands ever higher levels of prosperity.

Central to China’s ability to guarantee that prosperity is the return of Taiwan, and control of the sea lines of commerce and communication upon which it relies. Unfortunately, too many Americans underestimate the importance of these core interests to China and the lengths to which China will ultimately go in order to guarantee them – even the use of nuclear weapons.

Should China succeed it pushing the United States back, the PRC can deal with regional territorial disputes bilaterally and without U.S. involvement. After all, Washington invariably takes the non-Chinese side.

China sees the U.S. as a direct competitor and obstacle to its geopolitical ambitions. As such it is preparing for the next step in a crisis that it will likely instigate, control, and conclude in the Taiwan Straits. China will likely use the election or statement of a pro-independence high-ranking official as the impetus for action. This is the same method it used when it fired missiles in the Straits in response to remarks by then-President Lee Teng-hui, ushering in the 1996 Taiwan Straits Crisis. The U.S. brought an end to the mainland’s antics when the U.S.S Nimitz and six additional ships sailed into the Straits.

Despite the pro-China presidency of Ma Ying-jeou, China continues to expand its missile force targeting Taiwan and undertakes annual war games that simulate an attack on Taiwan.

China has not forgotten the humiliation it faced in 1996 and will be certain no U.S. carrier groups have access to the Strait during the next crisis. The Second Artillery Corps’ nuclear capabilities exist to help secure the results China seeks when the U.S. is caught off-guard, overwhelmed, and forced to either escalate a crisis or capitulate.

#### Sixth, this guarantees escalation to full-scale nuclear war.

White 15 — Hugh White, Professor of Strategic Studies at the Australian National University, former Intelligence Analyst with Australia’s Office of National Assessments and Senior Official with Australia’s Department of Defence, 2015 (“The harsh reality that Taiwan faces,” *The Straits Times*, April 15th, Available Online at http://www.straitstimes.com/opinion/the-harsh-reality-that-taiwan-faces, Accessed 06-25-2016)

Even more worryingly, this reality does not yet seem to have sunk in in Washington, where leaders still talk boldly about their willingness to stand by Taiwan without seriously considering what that might mean in practice. Any US effort to support Taiwan militarily against China would be almost certain to escalate into a full-scale US-China war and quite possibly a nuclear exchange. That would be a disaster for everyone, including, of course, the people of Taiwan itself — far worse than reunification, in fact.

#### Seventh, *deterrence* and *interdependence* fail — even a conventional response from the U.S. triggers counterforce fears and nuclear escalation.

Talmadge 16 — Caitlin Talmadge, Assistant Professor of Political Science and International Affairs and Member of the Institute for Security and Conflict Studies at The George Washington University, holds a Ph.D. in Political Science from The Massachusetts Institute of Technology, 2016 (“Preventing Nuclear Escalation in U.S.–China Conflict,” Policy Brief — U.S.-China Nuclear Project, February, Available Online at <https://www.wilsoncenter.org/sites/default/files/china_policy_brief_talmadge_0.pdf>, Accessed 06-24-2016, p. 2)

The Dangers of Nuclear Escalation in the Event of U.S.–China Conflict

Five factors suggest that a U.S.–China conventional war could activate this escalatory mechanism.

First, the United States embraces highly offensive conventional concepts of operations in the Pacific, despite the nuclear pressures these approaches might place on China. A U.S. campaign in a conventional war with China could target Chinese submarines, missile sites, command and control systems, air defense networks, and other sites well inside the Chinese mainland. From China’s perspective these assets may be relevant to China’s assured retaliation capability. Thus what the United States may view as a purely conventional operation might look to China like the prelude to a counterforce strike, creating strong use-or-lose pressures. Indeed, some Chinese statements indicate that conventional attacks on China’s nuclear capabilities could vitiate China’s no-first-use pledge.

Second, U.S. alliance commitments could further exacerbate this danger. The Pacific Ocean may insulate the United States from much of China’s striking power, but U.S. allies, particularly Japan and Taiwan, would be much more militarily and economically exposed in the event of a U.S.–China war. Even if the United States believed it could achieve security through a slower and more limited conventional campaign, U.S. allies might not share that conviction. This reality again suggests that U.S. conventional operations could quickly expand in ways that could appear to impinge on Chinese nuclear capabilities.

Third, the U.S. military’s organizational tendencies also tilt in the direction of a more conventionally aggressive campaign. For understandable reasons, militaries have a well-developed general preference for the offense. Militaries also tend to pursue tactical and operational advantages at the expense of broader strategic and political objectives. Historically this behavior has resulted in a U.S. approach that is very good at general deterrence (preventing the outbreak of war) but less adept at intra-war deterrence (that is, preventing ongoing wars from escalating).

Fourth, civilian control of the U.S. military is unlikely to check these tendencies. Some civilian policymakers may not be fully aware of the potentially escalatory implications of such approaches, while others may actually embrace these approaches. The historical record suggests that civilian oversight of conventional operations with nuclear implications has not always been robust.

Fifth, situational awareness is likely to deteriorate rapidly for the United States and especially China during a conventional conflict, in ways that further compound all of the escalatory pressures just discussed. After all, denying China knowledge of the battle space through the destruction of intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance assets (ISR) and command and control networks is likely to be one of the primary objectives of any U.S. military strategy. These sorts of attacks will be essential to U.S. conventional success but also will make it increasingly difficult for China to feel confident that U.S. aims are limited and that China’s nuclear retaliatory capabilities remain intact. Similarly, the United States may cross Chinese nuclear tripwires without realizing it.

#### Eighth, *mismatched perceptions* make nuclear escalation extremely likely. The risk is high — impact defense is wrong.

Kulacki 16 — Gregory Kulacki, China Project Manager in the Global Security Program at the Union of Concerned Scientists, former Associate Professor of Government at Green Mountain College, former Director of External Studies at Pitzer College, former Director of Academic Programs in China for the Council on International Educational Exchange, holds a Ph.D. in Political Theory from the University of Maryland-College Park, holds graduate certificates in Chinese Economic History and International Politics at Fudan University (Shanghai), 2016 (“The Risk of Nuclear War with China: A Troubling Lack of Urgency,” Union of Concerned Scientists, May, Available Online at <http://www.ucsusa.org/sites/default/files/attach/2016/05/Nuclear-War-with-China.pdf>, Accessed 06-28-2016)

No Technical Exit

As long as both sides remain committed to pursuing technical solutions to their unique strategic problems, they are condemned to continue competing indefinitely. But stalemate is not a stable outcome; rather, it is a perpetual high-wire act. Twenty-four hours a day, 365 days a year, the governments of the United States and China are a few poor decisions away from starting a war that could escalate rapidly and end in a nuclear exchange.

Lack of mutual trust and a growing sense that their differences may be irreconcilable incline both governments to continue looking for military solutions—for new means of coercion that help them feel more secure. Establishing the trust needed to have confidence in diplomatic resolutions to the disagreements, animosities, and suspicions that have troubled leaders of the United States and the PRC for almost 70 years is extremely difficult when both governments take every new effort to up the technological ante as an act of bad faith.

The bilateral dialogues on strategic stability aim to manage the military competition, but they do not seek to end it. Although the two governments work very hard at avoiding conflict, they have yet to find a way out of what Graham Allison called their “Thucydides trap”—the risk of conflict between a rising power and an established power invested in the status quo (Allison 2015). Allison’s warning not to minimize the risks of war is sage advice, even if he does not say how the United States and China can escape the trap he describes. [end page 8]

PRC leaders believe it is possible to prosecute a major war without risking a U.S. nuclear attack. The leaders of the United States believe stopping the PRC from prosecuting such a war may depend, in certain contingencies, on a credible threat to use nuclear weapons—a threat U.S. leaders state they are prepared to execute. These mismatched perceptions increase both the possibility of war and the likelihood it will result in the use of nuclear weapons.

Well-informed U.S. officials tend to dismiss the possibility that the United States and the PRC could wander into a nuclear war. For example, Admiral Dennis Blair, a former Director of National Intelligence whose final military post was Commander in Chief of the U.S. Pacific Command, assured a large gathering of U.S. arms-control experts that “the chances of a nuclear exchange between the United States and China are somewhere between nil and zero.” J. Stapleton Roy, a former U.S. ambassador to the PRC, wholeheartedly agreed (Swaine, Blair, and Roy 2015). Similarly, PRC military strategists and arms control experts believe that the risk of nuclear war with the United States is not an urgent concern even if that risk may not be zero (Cunningham and Fravel 2015).

This lack of urgency is troubling. For example, the United States reportedly told the PRC it would risk military escalation to prevent or stop a proposed PRC island reclamation project in the Scarborough Shoal (Cooper and Douglas 2016). The PRC reportedly responded by committing to move ahead with the project later in 2016 (Chan 2016). This particular contest of wills is part of a steadily increasing number of unresolved diplomatic spats that have escalated to the level of overt military posturing reminiscent of U.S.-Soviet jousting during the Cold War.

The United States and the PRC are decades-old enemies, preparing for war and armed with nuclear weapons. Good faith efforts by the leaders of both nations have failed to stop accelerating preparations for war, including new investments in their nuclear forces. Miscommunication, misunderstanding, or poor judgment could spark a conflict that both governments may find difficult to stop.

War between the United States and the People’s Republic of China is not inevitable, but failing to acknowledge the risks is certain to make it more likely. Both governments should confront these risks with a greater sense of purpose. Only then will they devote the same measure of creativity, effort, and resources to the diplomacy of reducing those risks as they now spend preparing for war.

#### Ninth, tensions over Taiwan are the root cause of other regional tensions. A grand bargain would eliminate the most likely scenarios for major war.

Glaser 15 — Charles L. Glaser, Professor of Political Science and International Affairs and Director of the Institute for Security and Conflict Studies at the Elliott School of International Affairs at George Washington University, Fellow in the Kissinger Institute at the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars, former Emmett Dedmon Professor of Public Policy and Acting Dean at the Harris School of Public Policy at the University of Chicago, former Strategic Analyst for the Joint Staff in the Pentagon, holds a Ph.D. and a Master’s in Public Policy from the Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University, 2015 (“Time for a U.S.-China Grand Bargain,” Belfer Center Policy Brief, July, Available Online at <http://belfercenter.hks.harvard.edu/files/glaser-us-china-jul15-final.pdf>, Accessed 06-24-2016, p. 2)

Reevaluating The U.S. Commitment To Taiwan

China’s rise poses difficult challenges for the United States. If military competition and political frictions continue to intensify, the United States could find itself engaged in a new cold war. China has long made clear that unification with Taiwan is a paramount political and security goal. The United States is currently committed to defending Taiwan if China launches an unprovoked attack. This commitment is a deep source of Chinese distrust of, and tension with, the United States. Consequently, the United States should consider ending this commitment. Doing so would have both benefits and costs.

Benefits. Eliminating the U.S. commitment to Taiwan would have three main benefits. First, it would reduce the probability of war between the United States and China over Taiwan. China’s improved military capabilities are reducing the United States’ ability to come to Taiwan’s aid in the event of a challenge from Beijing. These capabilities, combined with China’s expectation of growing regional influence, may lead China to decide to seek reunification with Taiwan through military means. Second, U.S. support for Taiwan may be the most important policy-driven source of China’s suspicions about U.S. motives and intentions in East Asia. Consequently, ending the U.S. commitment to Taiwan has the potential to dramatically improve U.S.-China relations. Third, terminating this commitment could also greatly moderate the intensifying military competition between the United States and China. Much of China’s military modernization, including its growing capability to control the sea lines of communication (SLOCs) in the South China and East China Seas, is dedicated to defending Taiwan. The United States has devised a concept, widely known as AirSea Battle, to counter China’s increasing capabilities and maintain dominance of these SLOCs. Ending the U.S. commitment to Taiwan would eliminate the scenario most likely to draw the United States into a large war with China, thus reducing the importance that China places on controlling these SLOCs and helping to significantly moderate U.S.-China competition.

#### Tenth, only the plan can resolve the security dilemma — Taiwan is key.

Glaser 15 — Charles L. Glaser, Professor of Political Science and International Affairs and Director of the Institute for Security and Conflict Studies at the Elliott School of International Affairs at George Washington University, Fellow in the Kissinger Institute at the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars, former Emmett Dedmon Professor of Public Policy and Acting Dean at the Harris School of Public Policy at the University of Chicago, former Strategic Analyst for the Joint Staff in the Pentagon, holds a Ph.D. and a Master’s in Public Policy from the Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University, 2015 (“A U.S.-China Grand Bargain? The Hard Choice between Military Competition and Accommodation,” *International Security*, Volume 39, Number 4, Spring, Available Online to Subscribing Institutions via MIT Press Journals)

Second, ending the U.S. commitment to defend Taiwan could greatly moderate the intensifying military competition between the United States and China, which is adding to strains in their relationship.72 Most directly, the United States is developing its AirSea Battle concept to counter China's A2/AD capabilities, which are intended primarily to undermine the U.S. ability to come to Taiwan's aid.73 The impact of the U.S. commitment to Taiwan on China's military requirements and capabilities, however, arguably reaches much further. China worries that in a conflict over Taiwan the United States will interrupt its SLOCs. This vulnerability would leave China open to U.S. coercion during severe crises and conventional wars.74 The United States dominates the SLOCs from the Persian Gulf to the Strait of Malacca and still enjoys significant military advantages in the South China and East China Seas. The requirement for both China and the United States to control these SLOCs during a crisis or war creates a security dilemma, which adds to strains in the U.S.-China relationship. There is no military-technical solution to this security dilemma, however, because two countries cannot control the same space.75

A decision by the United States to end its commitment to Taiwan could moderate this security dilemma in two important ways. By eliminating the scenario that is most likely to bring the United States and China into a large war, accommodation should significantly reduce the importance that China places on controlling its SLOCs. Although China would likely still find U.S. control undesirable, the military threat the United States posed to China's security would be greatly reduced. In addition, as explained above, U.S. accommodation could signal that U.S. goals in the region are limited, which should contribute to improving the U.S.-China relationship by increasing China's assessment that U.S. motives are benign, which would in turn further reduce the severity of the security dilemma.76

#### Eleventh, there’s no other solution — the U.S. will inevitably be forced to give up Taiwan. Until then, it’s the biggest flashpoint for escalatory superpower conflict.

Mearsheimer 14 — John J. Mearsheimer, R. Wendell Harrison Distinguished Service Professor of Political Science and Co-Director of the Program on International Security Policy at the University of Chicago, holds a Ph.D. in Political Science from Cornell University, 2014 (“Say Goodbye to Taiwan,” *The National Interest*, March/April, Available Online at <http://nationalinterest.org/article/say-goodbye-taiwan-9931?page=show>, Accessed 06-28-2016)

There is a second reason the United States might eventually forsake Taiwan: it is an especially dangerous flashpoint, which could easily precipitate a Sino-American war that is not in America’s interest. U.S. policy makers understand that the fate of Taiwan is a matter of great concern to Chinese of all persuasions and that they will be extremely angry if it looks like the United States is preventing unification. But that is exactly what Washington will be doing if it forms a close military alliance with Taiwan, and that point will not be lost on the Chinese people.

It is important to note in this regard that Chinese nationalism, which is a potent force, emphasizes how great powers like the United States humiliated China in the past when it was weak and appropriated Chinese territory like Hong Kong and Taiwan. Thus, it is not difficult to imagine crises breaking out over Taiwan or scenarios in which a crisis escalates into a shooting war. After all, Chinese nationalism will surely be a force for trouble in those crises, and China will at some point have the military wherewithal to conquer Taiwan, which will make war even more likely.

There was no flashpoint between the superpowers during the Cold War that was as dangerous as Taiwan will be in a Sino-American security competition. Some commentators liken Berlin in the Cold War to Taiwan, but Berlin was not sacred territory for the Soviet Union and it was actually of little strategic importance for either side. Taiwan is different. Given how dangerous it is for precipitating a war and given the fact that the United States will eventually reach the point where it cannot defend Taiwan, there is a reasonable chance that American policy makers will eventually conclude that it makes good strategic sense to abandon Taiwan and allow China to coerce it into accepting unification.

#### Twelfth, U.S.-China war immediately kills millions — and the fallout would destroy the planet.

Wittner 11 — Lawrence S. Wittner, Emeritus Professor of History at the State University of New York at Albany, holds a Ph.D. in History from Columbia University, 2011 (“Is a Nuclear War with China Possible?,” *Huntington News*, November 28th, Available Online at http://www.huntingtonnews.net/14446, Accessed 02-07-2013)

While nuclear weapons exist, there remains a danger that they will be used. After all, for centuries national conflicts have led to wars, with nations employing their deadliest weapons. The current deterioration of U.S. relations with China might end up providing us with yet another example of this phenomenon.

The gathering tension between the United States and China is clear enough. Disturbed by China’s growing economic and military strength, the U.S. government recently challenged China’s claims in the South China Sea, increased the U.S. military presence in Australia, and deepened U.S. military ties with other nations in the Pacific region. According to Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, the United States was “asserting our own position as a Pacific power.”

But need this lead to nuclear war?

Not necessarily. And yet, there are signs that it could. After all, both the United States and China possess large numbers of nuclear weapons. The U.S. government threatened to attack China with nuclear weapons during the Korean War and, later, during the conflict over the future of China’s offshore islands, Quemoy and Matsu. In the midst of the latter confrontation, President Dwight Eisenhower declared publicly, and chillingly, that U.S. nuclear weapons would “be used just exactly as you would use a bullet or anything else.”

Of course, China didn’t have nuclear weapons then. Now that it does, perhaps the behavior of national leaders will be more temperate. But the loose nuclear threats of U.S. and Soviet government officials during the Cold War, when both nations had vast nuclear arsenals, should convince us that, even as the military ante is raised, nuclear saber-rattling persists.

Some pundits argue that nuclear weapons prevent wars between nuclear-armed nations; and, admittedly, there haven’t been very many—at least not yet. But the Kargil War of 1999, between nuclear-armed India and nuclear-armed Pakistan, should convince us that such wars can occur. Indeed, in that case, the conflict almost slipped into a nuclear war. Pakistan’s foreign secretary threatened that, if the war escalated, his country felt free to use “any weapon” in its arsenal. During the conflict, Pakistan did move nuclear weapons toward its border, while India, it is claimed, readied its own nuclear missiles for an attack on Pakistan.

At the least, though, don’t nuclear weapons deter a nuclear attack? Do they? Obviously, NATO leaders didn’t feel deterred, for, throughout the Cold War, NATO’s strategy was to respond to a Soviet conventional military attack on Western Europe by launching a Western nuclear attack on the nuclear-armed Soviet Union. Furthermore, if U.S. government officials really believed that nuclear deterrence worked, they would not have resorted to championing “Star Wars” and its modern variant, national missile defense. Why are these vastly expensive—and probably unworkable—military defense systems needed if other nuclear powers are deterred from attacking by U.S. nuclear might?

Of course, the bottom line for those Americans convinced that nuclear weapons safeguard them from a Chinese nuclear attack might be that the U.S. nuclear arsenal is far greater than its Chinese counterpart. Today, it is estimated that the U.S. government possesses over five thousand nuclear warheads, while the Chinese government has a total inventory of roughly three hundred. Moreover, only about forty of these Chinese nuclear weapons can reach the United States. Surely the United States would “win” any nuclear war with China.

But what would that “victory” entail? A nuclear attack by China would immediately slaughter at least 10 million Americans in a great storm of blast and fire, while leaving many more dying horribly of sickness and radiation poisoning. The Chinese death toll in a nuclear war would be far higher. Both nations would be reduced to smoldering, radioactive wastelands. Also, radioactive debris sent aloft by the nuclear explosions would blot out the sun and bring on a “nuclear winter” around the globe—destroying agriculture, creating worldwide famine, and generating chaos and destruction.

Moreover, in another decade the extent of this catastrophe would be far worse. The Chinese government is currently expanding its nuclear arsenal, and by the year 2020 it is expected to more than double its number of nuclear weapons that can hit the United States. The U.S. government, in turn, has plans to spend hundreds of billions of dollars “modernizing” its nuclear weapons and nuclear production facilities over the next decade.

To avert the enormous disaster of a U.S.-China nuclear war, there are two obvious actions that can be taken. The first is to get rid of nuclear weapons, as the nuclear powers have agreed to do but thus far have resisted doing. The second, conducted while the nuclear disarmament process is occurring, is to improve U.S.-China relations. If the American and Chinese people are interested in ensuring their survival and that of the world, they should be working to encourage these policies.

#### Thirteenth, even a “limited” nuclear war would cause global devastation that kills billions and risks extinction — consensus of scientific studies.

Helfand 13 — Ira Helfand, Co-President of International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War, Past President of Physicians for Social Responsibility, Internist and Emergency Medicine Physician practicing at the Family Care Medical Center in Springfield, Massachusetts, holds degrees from Harvard College and the Albert Einstein College of Medicine, 2013 (“The Humanitarian Consequences Of Nuclear War,” *Arms Control Today*, November 4th, Available Online at <https://www.armscontrol.org/print/6021>, Accessed 06-29-2016)

This task is particularly urgent in view of the new data that have emerged over the last few years. This information indicates that even a very limited nuclear war, confined to one region of the globe, would have devastating effects worldwide.

In 2006, climatologist Alan Robock; Brian Toon, a professor of atmospheric and oceanic sciences; and four colleagues examined the consequences of a potential limited nuclear war between India and Pakistan.[1] They chose to examine the effects of this scenario because of the two countries’ long history of conflict and the ongoing risk of a nuclear exchange. India and Pakistan have fought three wars since they gained independence in 1947 and have come close to war twice when armed with nuclear weapons. During one crisis in the 1990s, it was reported that Pakistani planes armed with nuclear bombs were kept on the runway with their engines running 24 hours a day so they would be ready for takeoff on a few minutes’ notice.[2] It is easy to imagine events, such as an increase in tension over the disputed territories in Kashmir or another terrorist attack like those at the Indian parliament in 2001 or in Mumbai in 2008, that could escalate into full-scale warfare and the use of nuclear weapons.

In their study, Robock and Toon assumed that each country used 50 nuclear bombs, each with an explosive power of 15 kilotons—the power of the bomb dropped on Hiroshima in 1945—against urban targets in the other country. The weapons involved represent less than one-half of the current Indian and Pakistani arsenals and less than 0.5 percent of the world’s nuclear arsenals. The local effects were devastating: 20 million dead in the first week from blast effects, burns, and acute radiation exposure. Even more disturbing were their findings concerning the far-reaching disruption to global climate conditions that this conflict would cause.

The scientists found that the firestorms generated by these nuclear explosions would loft about 5 million tons of black soot high into the atmosphere. The soot would block out sunlight, dropping surface temperatures across the planet by an average of 1.3 degrees Celsius. The cooling would be much more severe in the internal regions of the major continents, shortening the growing season in areas where much of the world’s grain is produced. In addition, the cooling would lower total precipitation worldwide as less water evaporated from the oceans to fall back as rain or snow, and there would be significant changes in precipitation patterns.

Further, by heating the upper atmosphere, the soot particles would cause a major decrease in stratospheric ozone. By allowing substantially more ultraviolet light to reach the earth’s surface, this would further reduce crop yields. The soot particles would be injected so high in the atmosphere that they would not be washed out by rainfall. Their effects would persist for a full decade until they gradually settled back to earth.

The climate disruption predicted by the Robock-Toon study has been independently confirmed in separate studies done by climatologists Michael Mills2 and Andrea Stenke,[3] each of whom considered the same limited war scenario but used a different climate model.

In the last two years, a number of studies have attempted to look at the effect this climate disruption would have on food production. Environmental scientist Mutlu Özdogan looked at soybean production and corn production in the U.S. Corn Belt and found an average decline of 7 percent in soybean production and 12 percent in corn production in the decade following a limited war in South Asia.[4] Crop specialist Lili Xia and Robock examined the impact on middle-season rice production in China and found a 15 percent decline from the prewar level for the 10 years following this conflict.[5]

The world is not prepared to deal with this kind of significant decline in food production. World grain reserves amount to less than 70 days of consumption and would not offer a significant buffer against a sharp and sustained reduction in grain harvests.[6] In addition, 870 million people in the world today already are malnourished.[7] They receive less than the 1,800 calories per day required for the average adult to maintain his or her body mass and do a small amount of physical work to gather or grow food. Even a 10 or 15 percent decline from these levels of food consumption, sustained over a full decade, would be catastrophic. The decline in food consumption, however, probably would be much larger than the decline in food production. Market forces would magnify the impact with large rises in food prices, making even the available food inaccessible to the poor, who are already malnourished precisely because they cannot afford enough food at current prices.

Furthermore, some 300 million people live in countries where, although most people enjoy adequate nutrition today, much of the food is imported. Most of the countries of North Africa and the Middle East and many of the wealthy industrial countries of East Asia, including Japan, South Korea, and Taiwan, fall into this category. In the face of significant declines in food production, it is probable that grain-exporting countries would suspend exports. This has happened repeatedly, for limited periods of time, over the last decade in response to local crop shortfalls. Thus, these 300 million people also would face severe food insecurity.

In April 2012, at the Nobel Peace Laureates Summit in Chicago, International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War (IPPNW) and its U.S. affiliate, Physicians for Social Responsibility, released a report, “Nuclear Famine,” examining this potential catastrophe.[8] The report concluded that more than one billion people might starve as a result of a limited, regional nuclear war.

Since then, Xia and Robock have generated new data examining the impact of a limited nuclear war in South Asia on grain crops other than rice in China. Their findings, which will be published later this year, show that these other grains are affected much more severely than rice. In particular, production of the second-largest grain crop, winter wheat, is projected to fall 31 percent.

These new findings suggest that the “Nuclear Famine” report may have seriously underestimated the extent of the catastrophe that would follow a regional nuclear conflict and that arms control advocates need to fundamentally rethink their assumptions about limited nuclear war. The report assumed that China, along with most of the rest of the industrial world, would be spared actual famine. The latest studies suggest that there might be widespread starvation in China, putting another 1.3 billion people at risk. At the very least, the predicted food shortfalls would create a decade of severe economic and social instability in China, which is the largest country in the world and has the world’s second-largest and most dynamic economy. China also has a large nuclear arsenal of its own, estimated to be nearly 300 warheads, about 50 to 75 of which are deliverable by land-based intercontinental ballistic missiles.

There are no simulations examining whether there will be similar shortfalls in other temperate-zone grain producers such as Canada, Russia, the United States, and Europe except for Özdogan’s study of corn and soybeans in the United States. In the absence of such studies, it seems prudent to assume that these countries might well suffer the same major food shortages that are now predicted for China.

Regional War, Global Impact

In the 1980s, there was a general understanding that large-scale nuclear war between the United States and the Soviet Union would be a disaster, not just for those countries but for the whole planet.[9] From the studies described above, it is clear that even a much more limited nuclear war would be a global catastrophe, with severe humanitarian consequences extending far beyond the countries directly involved in the conflict.

These findings have significant implications for nuclear weapons policy choices in South Asia and for the policies of other states toward India and Pakistan. Yet, the issue extends well beyond South Asia. The arsenals of China, France, Israel, and the United Kingdom are all capable of causing the same or greater degrees of climate disruption.

More worrisome are the arsenals of the nuclear superpowers. Each U.S. Trident submarine can carry 96 warheads, each of which is 10 to 30 times more powerful than the weapons that were considered in the South Asia study. That means that each of these submarines can cause this nuclear famine scenario many times over. The United States has 14 of them, as well as an arsenal of land-based missiles and a fleet of strategic bombers armed with cruise missiles and gravity bombs. The Russian arsenal has a similar degree of overkill capacity.

The danger of nuclear war is often dismissed as a low-probability event and therefore not a cause for concern. The vast majority of the population, including people who were intensely aware of the nuclear danger during the Cold War, behaves as if this were true. Yet, the danger of nuclear war did not go away when the Berlin Wall came down. The arsenals remain, and the chance of nuclear war is not at all remote. As the number of nuclear-armed states increases, especially as nuclear arsenals grow in areas of chronic and seemingly intractable conflict, such as South Asia and the Middle East, the danger becomes even greater.

The possibility of war between the nuclear superpowers also still exists. Even if the likelihood of a deliberate nuclear war between the United States and Russia has declined, there remains the very real possibility of an accidental nuclear war. There have been at least five incidents since 1979 in which Moscow or Washington was prepared to start a nuclear war in the mistaken belief that it was already under attack by the other side.[10] The most recent known incident occurred in January 1995, a full five years after the fall of the Berlin Wall. The conditions that existed then have not changed fundamentally.

Human error, a computer failure, or perhaps a cyberattack launched by a terrorist group all could lead to the unintended launch of nuclear weapons. The new understanding of the climatic consequences of nuclear war makes it clear that even a very limited use of these weapons would be disastrous.

#### Finally, nuclear war is the *number one existential risk* — the case outweighs.

Sandberg 14 — Anders Sandberg, James Martin Research Fellow at the Future of Humanity Institute at Oxford University, holds a Ph.D. in Computational Neuroscience from Stockholm University, 2014 (“The Five Biggest Threats To Human Existence,” *Popular Science*, May 29th, Available Online at <http://www.popsci.com/article/science/five-biggest-threats-human-existence>, Accessed 10-07-2014)

In the daily hubbub of current “crises” facing humanity, we forget about the many generations we hope are yet to come. Not those who will live 200 years from now, but 1,000 or 10,000 years from now. I use the word “hope” because we face risks, called existential risks, that threaten to wipe out humanity. These risks are not just for big disasters, but for the disasters that could end history.

Not everyone has ignored the long future though. Mystics like Nostradamus have regularly tried to calculate the end of the world. HG Wells tried to develop a science of forecasting and famously depicted the far future of humanity in his book The Time Machine. Other writers built other long-term futures to warn, amuse or speculate.

But had these pioneers or futurologists not thought about humanity’s future, it would not have changed the outcome. There wasn’t much that human beings in their place could have done to save us from an existential crisis or even cause one.

We are in a more privileged position today. Human activity has been steadily shaping the future of our planet. And even though we are far from controlling natural disasters, we are developing technologies that may help mitigate, or at least, deal with them.

Future imperfect

Yet, these risks remain understudied. There is a sense of powerlessness and fatalism about them. People have been talking apocalypses for millennia, but few have tried to prevent them. Humans are also bad at doing anything about problems that have not occurred yet (partially because of the availability heuristic – the tendency to overestimate the probability of events we know examples of, and underestimate events we cannot readily recall).

If humanity becomes extinct, at the very least the loss is equivalent to the loss of all living individuals and the frustration of their goals. But the loss would probably be far greater than that. Human extinction means the loss of meaning generated by past generations, the lives of all future generations (and there could be an astronomical number of future lives) and all the value they might have been able to create. If consciousness or intelligence are lost, it might mean that value itself becomes absent from the universe. This is a huge moral reason to work hard to prevent existential threats from becoming reality. And we must not fail even once in this pursuit.

With that in mind, I have selected what I consider the five biggest threats to humanity’s existence. But there are caveats that must be kept in mind, for this list is not final.

Over the past century we have discovered or created new existential risks – supervolcanoes were discovered in the early 1970s, and before the Manhattan project nuclear war was impossible – so we should expect others to appear. Also, some risks that look serious today might disappear as we learn more. The probabilities also change over time – sometimes because we are concerned about the risks and fix them.

Finally, just because something is possible and potentially hazardous, doesn’t mean it is worth worrying about. There are some risks we cannot do anything at all about, such as gamma ray bursts that result from the explosions of galaxies. But if we learn we can do something, the priorities change. For instance, with sanitation, vaccines and antibiotics, pestilence went from an act of God to bad public health.

1. Nuclear war

While only two nuclear weapons have been used in war so far – at Hiroshima and Nagasaki in World War II – and nuclear stockpiles are down from their the peak they reached in the Cold War, it is a mistake to think that nuclear war is impossible. In fact, it might not be improbable.

The Cuban Missile crisis was very close to turning nuclear. If we assume one such event every 69 years and a one in three chance that it might go all the way to being nuclear war, the chance of such a catastrophe increases to about one in 200 per year.

Worse still, the Cuban Missile crisis was only the most well-known case. The history of Soviet-US nuclear deterrence is full of close calls and dangerous mistakes. The actual probability has changed depending on international tensions, but it seems implausible that the chances would be much lower than one in 1000 per year.

A full-scale nuclear war between major powers would kill hundreds of millions of people directly or through the near aftermath – an unimaginable disaster. But that is not enough to make it an existential risk.

Similarly the hazards of fallout are often exaggerated – potentially deadly locally, but globally a relatively limited problem. Cobalt bombs were proposed as a hypothetical doomsday weapon that would kill everybody with fallout, but are in practice hard and expensive to build. And they are physically just barely possible.

The real threat is nuclear winter – that is, soot lofted into the stratosphere causing a multi-year cooling and drying of the world. Modern climate simulations show that it could preclude agriculture across much of the world for years. If this scenario occurs billions would starve, leaving only scattered survivors that might be picked off by other threats such as disease. The main uncertainty is how the soot would behave: depending on the kind of soot the outcomes may be very different, and we currently have no good ways of estimating this.

2. Bioengineered pandemic

Natural pandemics have killed more people than wars. However, natural pandemics are unlikely to be existential threats: there are usually some people resistant to the pathogen, and the offspring of survivors would be more resistant. Evolution also does not favor parasites that wipe out their hosts, which is why syphilis went from a virulent killer to a chronic disease as it spread in Europe.

Unfortunately we can now make diseases nastier. One of the more famous examples is how the introduction of an extra gene in mousepox – the mouse version of smallpox – made it far more lethal and able to infect vaccinated individuals. Recent work on bird flu has demonstrated that the contagiousness of a disease can be deliberately boosted.

Right now the risk of somebody deliberately releasing something devastating is low. But as biotechnology gets better and cheaper, more groups will be able to make diseases worse.

Most work on bioweapons have been done by governments looking for something controllable, because wiping out humanity is not militarily useful. But there are always some people who might want to do things because they can. Others have higher purposes. For instance, the Aum Shinrikyo cult tried to hasten the apocalypse using bioweapons beside their more successful nerve gas attack. Some people think the Earth would be better off without humans, and so on.

The number of fatalities from bioweapon and epidemic outbreaks attacks looks like it has a power-law distribution – most attacks have few victims, but a few kill many. Given current numbers the risk of a global pandemic from bioterrorism seems very small. But this is just bioterrorism: governments have killed far more people than terrorists with bioweapons (up to 400,000 may have died from the WWII Japanese biowar program). And as technology gets more powerful in the future nastier pathogens become easier to design.

3. Superintelligence

Intelligence is very powerful. A tiny increment in problem-solving ability and group coordination is why we left the other apes in the dust. Now their continued existence depends on human decisions, not what they do. Being smart is a real advantage for people and organisations, so there is much effort in figuring out ways of improving our individual and collective intelligence: from cognition-enhancing drugs to artificial-intelligence software.

The problem is that intelligent entities are good at achieving their goals, but if the goals are badly set they can use their power to cleverly achieve disastrous ends. There is no reason to think that intelligence itself will make something behave nice and morally. In fact, it is possible to prove that certain types of superintelligent systems would not obey moral rules even if they were true.

Even more worrying is that in trying to explain things to an artificial intelligence we run into profound practical and philosophical problems. Human values are diffuse, complex things that we are not good at expressing, and even if we could do that we might not understand all the implications of what we wish for.

Software-based intelligence may very quickly go from below human to frighteningly powerful. The reason is that it may scale in different ways from biological intelligence: it can run faster on faster computers, parts can be distributed on more computers, different versions tested and updated on the fly, new algorithms incorporated that give a jump in performance.

It has been proposed that an “intelligence explosion” is possible when software becomes good enough at making better software. Should such a jump occur there would be a large difference in potential power between the smart system (or the people telling it what to do) and the rest of the world. This has clear potential for disaster if the goals are badly set.

The unusual thing about superintelligence is that we do not know if rapid and powerful intelligence explosions are possible: maybe our current civilisation as a whole is improving itself at the fastest possible rate. But there are good reasons to think that some technologies may speed things up far faster than current societies can handle. Similarly we do not have a good grip on just how dangerous different forms of superintelligence would be, or what mitigation strategies would actually work. It is very hard to reason about future technology we do not yet have, or intelligences greater than ourselves. Of the risks on this list, this is the one most likely to either be massive or just a mirage.

This is a surprisingly under-researched area. Even in the 50s and 60s when people were extremely confident that superintelligence could be achieved “within a generation”, they did not look much into safety issues. Maybe they did not take their predictions seriously, but more likely is that they just saw it as a remote future problem.

4. Nanotechnology

Nanotechnology is the control over matter with atomic or molecular precision. That is in itself not dangerous – instead, it would be very good news for most applications. The problem is that, like biotechnology, increasing power also increases the potential for abuses that are hard to defend against.

The big problem is not the infamous “grey goo” of self-replicating nanomachines eating everything. That would require clever design for this very purpose. It is tough to make a machine replicate: biology is much better at it, by default. Maybe some maniac would eventually succeed, but there are plenty of more low-hanging fruits on the destructive technology tree.

The most obvious risk is that atomically precise manufacturing looks ideal for rapid, cheap manufacturing of things like weapons. In a world where any government could “print” large amounts of autonomous or semi-autonomous weapons (including facilities to make even more) arms races could become very fast – and hence unstable, since doing a first strike before the enemy gets a too large advantage might be tempting.

Weapons can also be small, precision things: a “smart poison” that acts like a nerve gas but seeks out victims, or ubiquitous “gnatbot” surveillance systems for keeping populations obedient seems entirely possible. Also, there might be ways of getting nuclear proliferation and climate engineering into the hands of anybody who wants it.

We cannot judge the likelihood of existential risk from future nanotechnology, but it looks like it could be potentially disruptive just because it can give us whatever we wish for.

5. Unknown unknowns

The most unsettling possibility is that there is something out there that is very deadly, and we have no clue about it.

The silence in the sky might be evidence for this. Is the absence of aliens due to that life or intelligence is extremely rare, or that intelligent life tends to get wiped out? If there is a future Great Filter, it must have been noticed by other civilisations too, and even that didn’t help.

Whatever the threat is, it would have to be something that is nearly unavoidable even when you know it is there, no matter who and what you are. We do not know about any such threats (none of the others on this list work like this), but they might exist.

Note that just because something is unknown it doesn’t mean we cannot reason about it. In a remarkable paper Max Tegmark and Nick Bostrom show that a certain set of risks must be less than one chance in a billion per year, based on the relative age of Earth.

You might wonder why climate change or meteor impacts have been left off this list. Climate change, no matter how scary, is unlikely to make the entire planet uninhabitable (but it could compound other threats if our defences to it break down). Meteors could certainly wipe us out, but we would have to be very unlucky. The average mammalian species survives for about a million years. Hence, the background natural extinction rate is roughly one in a million per year. This is much lower than the nuclear-war risk, which after 70 years is still the biggest threat to our continued existence.

The availability heuristic makes us overestimate risks that are often in the media, and discount unprecedented risks. If we want to be around in a million years we need to correct that.

### 1AC — Plan

#### The United States federal government should negotiate a grand bargain with the People’s Republic of China by offering to end its commitment to defend Taiwan against Chinese aggression in return for China peacefully resolving its maritime and land disputes in the South China and East China Seas and officially accepting the United States’ long-term military security role in East Asia.

### 1AC — Chinese Opacity Advantage

#### Contention Two: Chinese Opacity

#### First, China will say “*yes*” to the plan — it’s a good deal and it’s good politics.

Glaser 16 — Charles L. Glaser, Professor of Political Science and International Affairs and Director of the Institute for Security and Conflict Studies at the Elliott School of International Affairs at George Washington University, Fellow in the Kissinger Institute at the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars, former Emmett Dedmon Professor of Public Policy and Acting Dean at the Harris School of Public Policy at the University of Chicago, former Strategic Analyst for the Joint Staff in the Pentagon, holds a Ph.D. and a Master’s in Public Policy from the Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University, 2016 (“Grand Bargain or Bad Idea? U.S. Relations with China and Taiwan,” *International Security*, Volume 40, Number 4, Spring, Available Online to Subscribing Institutions via Project Muse)

The probability that China would accept the grand bargain might be low, but neither the history that Kim reviews nor current Chinese thinking make this a certainty. As I [End Page 188] note in my article, there are reasons for doubting that China would make the required concessions: China’s positions on its long-standing disputes in the South China and East China Seas appear to have hardened over the past decade. Meanwhile, Chinese nationalism continues to grow, and President Xi Jinping appears committed to increasing China’s global prestige, which could rule out geopolitical compromises.

Nevertheless, the grand bargain would provide China with a major achievement at arguably little cost. Current Chinese nationalist claims have blown the importance of the maritime and sovereignty disputes in the South China and East China Seas far out of proportion to their material value. If China’s leaders decide to prioritize other goals, they might be able to deflate these nationalist claims, bringing them back in line with their actual value and selling this new interpretation domestically. At the same time, Chinese leaders should see that the grand bargain would provide large benefits to China, including elimination of the United States as a barrier to bringing Taiwan under its full sovereign control and, closely related, a large reduction in the security threat posed by the United States. The grand bargain, therefore, could be appealing to a Chinese leadership that faces daunting domestic challenges and intensifying regional opposition to its assertive policies and growing military might. Thus, while the probability of China accepting the grand bargain may be low, one should not entirely discount the possibility.

#### Second, China’s response to the plan provides valuable information about its intentions and motives. If China says “no,” it means hardliners have control and Chinese foreign policy will become increasingly assertive.

Glaser 15 — Charles L. Glaser, Professor of Political Science and International Affairs and Director of the Institute for Security and Conflict Studies at the Elliott School of International Affairs at George Washington University, Fellow in the Kissinger Institute at the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars, former Emmett Dedmon Professor of Public Policy and Acting Dean at the Harris School of Public Policy at the University of Chicago, former Strategic Analyst for the Joint Staff in the Pentagon, holds a Ph.D. and a Master’s in Public Policy from the Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University, 2015 (“A U.S.-China Grand Bargain? The Hard Choice between Military Competition and Accommodation,” *International Security*, Volume 39, Number 4, Spring, Available Online to Subscribing Institutions via MIT Press Journals)

China's willingness to reach an agreement on the offshore islands and related maritime disputes would provide the United States with valuable information. Most obviously, it would demonstrate that China's aims are limited (at least for now). Closely related, it would demonstrate a degree of reasonableness in Chinese foreign policy priorities and decisionmaking: given that the value of Taiwan dwarfs the value of these maritime disputes, Chinese unwillingness to reach this type of bargain would indicate deep inflexibility in its emerging foreign policy and possibly overconfidence in its ability to use its growing power to achieve all of its aims. China's claims in these disputes are also weaker than its claims to Taiwan: for example, China did not claim the Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands until 1970, which suggests that it should be able to moderate this claim if the benefits were sufficiently large. In addition, an agreement would provide the United States with insights into the balance of power within China's foreign policy decisionmaking. If China's more assertive policies have reflected the growing influence of the People's Liberation Army, narrow nationalist pressures, or both, then Chinese concessions would demonstrate that the country's leaders could control these forces when the stakes are sufficiently large. Taken as a whole, this information about China's goals would make U.S. accommodation over Taiwan less risky.

#### Third, the plan provides concrete evidence about China’s intentions. Without it, U.S. policymakers must rely on flawed assumptions that erase nuance and create a self-fulfilling prophecy.

Varrall 16 — Merriden Varrall, Director of the East Asia Program at the Lowy Institute for International Policy—an Australian think tank, former Assistant Country Director and Senior Policy Advisor at the United Nations Development Programme in China, former Lecturer in Foreign Policy at the China Foreign Affairs University, holds a Ph.D. in Political Anthropology from Macquarie University (Sydney) and the Vrije Universiteit (Amsterdam) and an M.A. in International Affairs from the Australian National University, 2016 (“The real danger in the South China Sea is repeating assumptions until they become truth,” *The Interpreter*—a publication of the Lowy Institute for International Policy (an Australian think tank), May 6th, Available Online at <http://www.lowyinterpreter.org/post/2016/05/06/Real-danger-in-South-China-Sea-is-reiterating-assumptions-until-they-become-truth.aspx>, Accessed 07-24-2016)

Recently, The Interpreter published another post warning readers of the dangers of China's intentions and actions in the South China Sea.

The piece argues that 'the real danger' is that 'China will take its notion of "sovereign rights" in the South China Sea too far, and that China's para-military forces will be employed to eject fishing vessels and other units of the littoral nations, probably starting with the Philippines'. The post also implies that it is almost inevitable that China will build 'yet another artificial island' and declare an Air Defence Identification Zone (ADIZ) over the South China Sea. The author concludes with a warning that if China gains dominion over the region, resentment will fester in other claimant nations, and peace will be lost. It cautions China to 'finesse its policies for the South China Sea with a sensitivity that has so far been absent from much that it has done'.

It is of course unarguably true that China has, among other things, been undertaking some fast-paced building activities in the region, has declared an ADIZ in the East China Sea and has said that an ADIZ in the South China Sea is not out of the question. It seems to be just clear common sense that what this adds up to is China's desire for regional pre-eminence.

What else, when you look at the facts, could it mean?

Let us for a moment remember that 'common sense' is not universal. It's not even necessarily shared between two people from within the same social group, let alone across vastly different cultures. Interpretation of what we think we see is not flawless; each individual has their own lens through which meaning is created. So let us just for a moment pause to ask what hard evidence we have — apart from our own interpretation of what we see — of China's intentions.

This is of course almost impossible; where would one turn for such evidence? The Global Times says one thing. The spokesperson from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs says another. The high profile academic something different. The retired army general something else again, and what we can gauge of public opinion is a whole other matter.

So, all that we can really conclude is that there are different views within China about what China wants to achieve, and how best to achieve it, and we on the outside cannot really know for sure.

Considerable debate exists around the extent to which actors behave independently or as part of a grand, directed strategy. No one, in fact, really knows. Xi Jinping no doubt has a pretty strong view of what he wants to achieve — the 'China Dream' — but the specifics of that vision are not universally agreed. Yes, Xi has consolidated a great deal of power, but its debatable whether he has been successful in owning and operating the entire system.

It is the very lack of certainty about what China wants that constitutes a large part of the concern over its activities. There have been a lot of calls for China to clarify its intentions.

Without this clarity, though, many analysts conclude that determining meaning from what we see is the only reliable method. From what we see, interpreted through our own understanding of how international geopolitics works, China's activities certainly look like it is trying to push the US out of the region to replace it as the predominant power. If that's the case, what does it matter what its motivations are? What difference does it make why it wants to be predominant? Is it relevant if Chinese notions of predominance are different from our own?

These issues are important when we are weighing up risks and when developing responses, if we want those responses to be effective in the long term. There is little point, in the long run, trying to quash the symptoms without addressing the cause.

As I have argued elsewhere, Chinese policy elites see the world and China's role in it differently from Western policymakers. Something as apparently obvious as 'predominance' is actually a very culturally nuanced concept. Can we safely assume it means to the Chinese exactly what it means to us? Even a fleeting study of Chinese language and culture will show how many variations there are to something that we think has a clear meaning.

Chinese Culture 101 teaches that Chinese people don't like to say 'no' to requests – but it doesn't mean there are things they can't or don't want to do. The term 'it's not convenient' doesn't mean 'it's not convenient', it means 'no', but many an over-enthusiastic foreigner has pushed ahead regardless, to everyone's frustration and embarrassment. These are of course simple examples, but what they indicate is that if there is space for misunderstanding and misinterpretation at the most mundane level, there is certainly a significant possibility for misunderstanding and misinterpretation in international geopolitics, with far more serious implications.

I do not mean to single this article for particular scrutiny; it is just one of many, largely from within the defence and security community in Australia and the US, that places the onus of responsibility for peace in the region at China's feet. The authors are of course well intentioned: in their line of business, being acutely sensitive to and highly anxious about the national interest is their bread and butter. But, like all of us, their background and position colours their perspective. As such, their analyses tend to rest on assumptions of what China is trying to achieve and why, or on a conviction that motivations don't actually matter when the reality is so clear. But the truth is, most of them, like the rest of us, actually do not know.

In fact, 'the real danger' is that we continue to allow discussion about China's regional behaviour and aspirations to be dominated by views from only one field based on a shared perspective, in a circular reiteration of a particular set of assumptions, until they become solidified as unquestionable 'truths'.

If (and most analysts could probably agree on this) the current period is becoming increasingly tense, it is paramount that we ensure that we are seeing the picture in all its nuance, and not just in black and white.

#### Fourth, the U.S.’s inability to understand China’s intentions risks miscalculation. Overcoming opacity is vital to prevent conflict.

Chance 15 — Alek Chance, Research Fellow and Program Coordinator at the Institute for China-American Studies—an independent, non-profit DC think tank funded by the Hainan Nanhai Research Foundation in China, Adjunct Assistant Professor of Political Science at the University of Maryland University College, former Resident Fellow at the Stockdale Center at the United States Naval Academy, holds a Ph.D. in Political Science from Boston College, 2015 (“The ‘Opaque Intentions’ Issue,” Institute for China-American Studies, April 27th, Available Online at <http://chinaus-icas.org/materials/opaque-intentions-issue/>, Accessed 07-15-2016)

Many analysts seem to believe that the islands in the South China Sea have little immediate or intrinsic strategic importance to the US or even some of the regional stakeholders. Rather, American scholars and policymakers tend to view the “new assertiveness” of China in the region as being significant mostly because of what it appears to signal. Many worry that recent events indicate a possible shift in China’s long-term strategy, and introduce an element of unpredictability. In short, the maritime security issues have done much to reinforce the perception that China’s intentions are “opaque,” and all too difficult to decipher.

The word “opaque” is frequently used in this sense in Washington circles, and the problem of unknown intentions shapes American perceptions of the relationship at different levels. For one, American thinkers are divided in their explanations for the perceived “new assertiveness.” Some argue it is a function of domestic politics, some contend it is a coordinated strategy to erode American influence in the region, and a variety of perspectives fall somewhere in between. (Some scholars even dispute that there is any such trend as a “new assertiveness” in the first place.)

This lack of consensus about the causes of Chinese behavior in turn facilitates uncertainty in the US about the future character of the bilateral relationship and China’s position in the global order. Along these lines, analysts in the US and other countries often interpret recent Chinese behavior as signaling a rejection of a “rules-based” international system—a phrase that is also very frequently used in conjunction with these issues.

At the level of concrete security strategies, the problem of “opacity” presents difficulties as well. In some quarters, American analysts are worried about a security dilemma in the Asia-Pacific region. According to this view, Chinese A2AD technologies and the United States’ (now renamed) “AirSea Battle Concept” unnecessarily create tensions because of a lack of mutual understanding about the rationales behind them.

The problems arising from “opaque” intentions are both well recognized and endemic to international politics. Yet it is helpful to reflect upon how to avoid scenarios of misperception between states, and political science has much to say on the matter. Robert Jervis, in his now classic body of work on misperception in international politics, identifies a number of tendencies statesmen have to underestimate the difficulties of communicating their positions to foreign counterparts.[1] Policymakers tend to overestimate how effective they are in communicating their messages, and they also often overestimate the degree to which the actions of counterparts are indicative of coherent policies.

Both of these observations seem relevant to the current period of US/China relations. As the scholar Amitai Etzioni pointed out in a 2013 article,[2] the Pentagon’s development of the operational concept formerly called “AirSea Battle” might have looked like the military prong of a US containment strategy for China. However, Etzioni found no evidence that the Obama administration put much thought into the issue at all, but was instead focused on trade and human rights issues in the relationship. If true, this means that the administration sent an unintended signal about US intentions, one that communicated a tougher stance than the President had meant. This was further compounded by the administration’s clumsy articulation of the rationale behind the “Asia pivot,” something that has drawn much criticism from American observers. The fact that both “the pivot” and “AirSea Battle” have since been renamed suggests that the Obama administration acknowledges a misperception problem in this area. In a recent article, Harry Kazianis criticizes the White House for a lack of a transparent and coherent messaging campaign explaining the rationales behind its strategic concepts in the Asia-Pacific region.[3] He finds that insufficient communication has led China to misunderstand US policies, which in turn has facilitated a security dilemma.

On the Chinese side, recent decisions in the South China Sea may well be the results of uncoordinated bureaucratic decisions, a new focus on responding to popular demands for the settlement of sovereignty disputes, or other dynamics that have gone unrecognized in the United States. Whatever the origins of recent decisions, the signal that is often received in the US is one of a coordinated undermining of the “rules-based” international system, a challenging of US leadership in the region, or the aspiration to undue influence over neighboring states. If some or all of these are unintended signals, then clearly much work must be done on both sides to discover better modes of communication through which long-term strategic visions can be more clearly articulated.

While states can derive certain advantages from being intentionally opaque, they are often so only through poor organization or communication strategies, or by making incorrect assumptions about their counterparts’ perceptions. Because of the great importance of the relationship to global security, it is especially incumbent on the US and China to identify incoherence in their foreign policies, obstacles to communication, and sources of possible misperception so that the role of opacity in statecraft is as limited as possible.

#### Finally, if China says “no,” there’s no disadvantage — insisting on a QPQ that China rejects demonstrates U.S. resolve and preserves alliance credibility because it reinforces the U.S.’s commitment to Taiwan.

Glaser 15 — Charles L. Glaser, Professor of Political Science and International Affairs and Director of the Institute for Security and Conflict Studies at the Elliott School of International Affairs at George Washington University, Fellow in the Kissinger Institute at the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars, former Emmett Dedmon Professor of Public Policy and Acting Dean at the Harris School of Public Policy at the University of Chicago, former Strategic Analyst for the Joint Staff in the Pentagon, holds a Ph.D. and a Master’s in Public Policy from the Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University, 2015 (“A U.S.-China Grand Bargain? The Hard Choice between Military Competition and Accommodation,” *International Security*, Volume 39, Number 4, Spring, Available Online to Subscribing Institutions via MIT Press Journals)

The Logic of a Grand Bargain

The preceding assessment lays bare the complexity of a U.S. policy of territorial accommodation. On the one hand, ending the U.S. commitment to Taiwan could greatly reduce and might even eliminate the possibility of a large war between the United States and China by keeping the United States out of a China-Taiwan conflict. In addition, accommodation could improve China's understanding of U.S. goals and its image of the United States, and moderate military competition in Northeast Asia, thereby setting U.S.-China relations on a promising trajectory that takes advantage of the relatively benign structural environment in which China's rise will occur. On the other hand, accommodation would be costly—running contrary to U.S. political and ideological interests—and risky, possibly reducing U.S. security by fueling Chinese underestimates of U.S. resolve and by encouraging China to adopt more extensive geopolitical aims.

The United States' choice of whether to end its commitment to defend Taiwan is complicated further by uncertainty about the nature and extent of China's goals. If China places relatively little value on expanding its control and influence beyond Taiwan, then even if U.S. accommodation generated doubts about U.S. resolve, they would be of little consequence. In contrast, if China highly values winning all of its maritime disputes and pushing the United States out of Northeast Asia, then reductions in U.S. credibility would be more costly. Similarly, if China's aims are both limited and stable, then U.S. accommodation would not risk creating a more dangerous China. In contrast, if China's goals are still evolving and if U.S. accommodation would empower domestic hard-liners, then U.S. security would be reduced.

Therefore, the question arises whether policies exist that would reduce the risks while preserving the benefits of U.S. accommodation on Taiwan. If combining certain concessions by China in an overall package—a grand bargain, for lack of a better term—could achieve this goal, then the United States' best option might be to make ending its commitment to Taiwan contingent on China making concessions of its own. The preceding analysis suggests that the United States should design such a grand bargain with a variety of purposes in mind: to gain information about the nature and extent of China's motives; to demonstrate its resolve to retain U.S. security commitments in the region; and, related, to preserve the credibility of its commitments to its allies.

## 1NC

### 1NC — Alliance Credibility DA

#### First/next off is the Alliance Credibility DA.

#### First, the plan destroys U.S. security alliances in Asia, sparks an arms race, and ends U.S. primacy in East Asia.

Rehman 14 — Iskander Rehman, Fellow at the Center for Strategic and Budgetary Assessments, former Stanton Nuclear Security Fellow at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, former Visiting Fellow in Security Studies at the Observer Research Foundation, former Research Fellow at the German Marshall Fund of the United States, holds a Ph.D. in Political Science and Government from Sciences Po—The Paris Institute of Political Studies, 2014 (“Why Taiwan Matters,” *The National Interest*, February 28th, Available Online at <http://nationalinterest.org/commentary/why-taiwan-matters-9971?page=show>, Accessed 07-10-2016)

Abandoning Taiwan would erode American credibility in the Indo-Pacific and add fuel to an ongoing regional arms race.

Taiwan policy cannot be compartmentalized, and viewed in isolation from the pivot and U.S. policy towards Asia. Decision-makers in Seoul, Tokyo, and Manila would naturally question U.S. resolve and Washington’s commitment to their security in the event of an abandonment of Taiwan. Japan, in particular, would feel threatened by the stationing of Chinese forces on Taiwan—in essence losing a valuable geopolitical buffer—in such close proximity to its southwestern approaches. Heightened threat perceptions in Tokyo, if combined with a lack of faith in the credibility of U.S. conventional and nuclear deterrence, could lead Japan to acquire a nuclear-weapons capability.

The corrosive effect of forfeiting Taiwan would also extend to other key allies such as South Korea, which might question Washington’s determination to defend it from North Korean aggression. Indeed, recent public-opinion polls have indicated that a growing proportion of the South Korean public now favors the development of a South Korean nuclear arsenal. Revealingly, the reasons invoked for such a shift were growing concerns over North Korea’s increasingly unpredictable and belligerent behavior, as well as over the continued viability of the United States’ security guarantee.

Meanwhile, smaller regional states might find themselves both disinclined to place their faith in the United States, and cowed into submission by a more self-assured and advantageously positioned China. An abandonment of Taiwan could thus lead to a creeping Finlandization—or rapid nuclearization—of large tracts of the Indo-Pacific, and, in time, to the sunset of American primacy in Asia. Taiwan, therefore, most certainly matters.

#### Second, East Asian alliances are key to prevent great power wars — consensus of the best research.

Beauchamp citing BW 16 — Zack Beauchamp, World Correspondent at *Vox*, former Editor of *TP Ideas*—a Think Progress project, former Reporter for *Think Progress*, former writer for Andrew Sullivan’s *The Dish* at Newsweek/Daily Beast, has written for *Foreign Policy* and *Tablet* magazines, holds an M.S. in International Relations from the London School of Economics and a B.A. in Philosophy and Political Science from Brown University, citing a forthcoming book from Stephen G. Brooks, Associate Professor in the Department of Government at Dartmouth College, former Fellow in the Belfer Center for Science and International Affairs at Harvard University, holds a Ph.D. in Political Science from Yale University, and William C. Wohlforth, Daniel Webster Professor in the Department of Government at Dartmouth College, holds a Ph.D. in Political Science from Yale University, 2016 (“Donald Trump is wrong: America wins all the time, and this new book proves it,” *Vox*, June 7th, Available Online at <http://www.vox.com/2016/6/7/11868208/donald-trump-america-winning>, Accessed 07-24-2016)

How America translates its power into benefits for itself

The United States has used its overwhelmingly dominant position in a historically peculiar way. Instead of colonizing other countries and taking their resources — something Trump has proposed — it has built a web of alliances, partnerships, and global institutions. Things like NATO, the United Nations, and the International Monetary Fund link the US to other countries, a system designed to discourage military aggression and encourage trade and global economic development.

One could argue that the US, despite its overwhelming global dominance, is getting a raw deal from these institutions. That establishing and maintaining bases in other countries like Japan and Germany costs the US a lot of money without getting much back in return.

This is a staple of Trump's rhetoric on foreign policy. "Our allies are not paying their fair share," Trump said in a major speech outlining his foreign policy in April. "The countries we are defending must pay for the cost of this defense — and, if not, the US must be prepared to let these countries defend themselves."

The bulk of Brooks and Wohlforth's book is devoted to challenging this argument. Their claim, after spending nearly a decade surveying the academic research, is that America's forward strategy, which they call "deep engagement," has tremendous benefits — and comes at a lower cost than Trump and others think.

The basic case for America's alliances and forward bases, in Brooks and Wohlforth's estimation, is that they make the world far more peaceful than it would be otherwise.

It's easy to forget now, but conflicts between major powers used to be fairly common. Think of the War of 1812, the Napoleonic Wars, the Crimean War, the Franco-Prussian War, the Russo-Japanese War, and World War I, just to give examples from one 120-year period.

Since World War II, however, there have been exactly zero wars between major powers.

Brooks and Wohlforth argue that one major reason why is American security policy. The US's alliances and bases in Europe and East Asia deter aggression from hostile powers like Russia and China.

Moreover, this strategy puts potential rivals — like Germany and France, or Japan and South Korea — on the same military side.

These countries have historically seen each other as threats, given their geographic proximity, and hence built up their militaries to counter each other. But with the United States guaranteeing security to both sides, neither country feels particularly threatened (nor do they feel threatened by the US, which has demonstrated no interest in turning France or South Korea into a US colony). Therefore, the countries don't have each other to fear, reducing the risk of a conflict between them.

This argument is rooted in rigorous quantitative research. One study, from professors Jesse C. Johnson and Brett Ashley Leeds, surveyed about 200 years of data on conflicts and concluded that "defensive alliances lower the probability of international conflict and are thus a good policy option for states seeking to maintain peace in the world."

Another study looked specifically at the 1950-to-2000 period and found that "formal alliances with nuclear states appear to carry significant deterrence benefits." The US's formal agreements, then, deter aggression against its non-nuclear partners (like Japan and Germany).

Brooks and Wohlforth also surveyed research from regional experts and found a similar consensus. Among East Asia scholars, "the dominant view" is that the US deployment secures the region, preventing "arms racing, nuclear proliferation, [and] militarized crises." Likewise, in Europe, "most assessments nonetheless sum up to the conclusion that NATO is a net security plus."

Now, Brooks and Wohlforth's argument does not mean that without the United States' current policies, a major war in Europe or East Asia would be inevitable. That's impossible to know for sure, especially since there are other reasons, like the spread of democracy, that make war less common than it used to be.

What it does mean, however, is that we have very good reason to believe such wars would be more likely with different US policy. And such wars would be very bad, both for the United States (which relies on global peace for its own prosperity and security) and for the world.

### 1NC — Chinese Expansionism DA

#### First/next off is the Chinese Expansionism DA.

#### First, the plan emboldens China to be more aggressive in the ECS and SCS. Control of Taiwan gives them unique leverage and opportunity.

Easley 16 — Leif-Eric Easley, Assistant Professor in the Division of International Studies at Ewha University, Research Fellow at the Asan Institute for Policy Studies in Seoul, former Northeast Asian History Fellow at the Shorenstein Asia-Pacific Research Center at Stanford University, holds a Ph.D. from the Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University, 2016 (“Grand Bargain or Bad Idea? U.S. Relations with China and Taiwan,” *International Security*, Volume 40, Number 4, Spring, Available Online to Subscribing Institutions via Project Muse)

Rather than alleviate frictions, a grand bargain would likely motivate beliefs that China could eventually dismantle the U.S. security architecture in Asia, emboldening actors on the Chinese side to pursue their interests more assertively. U.S. abandonment of Taiwan would entail repealing the Taiwan Relations Act, ending the legal basis for defense cooperation and arms sales, immediately undermining deterrence, and steadily [End Page 180] degrading Taiwan’s defense capabilities in ways difficult to reverse.14 Meanwhile, China’s salami tactics, in combination with its ability to quickly redeploy military assets it might agree to pull back and its demonstrated long-term approach to the East China and South China Seas, make any such deal as Glaser suggests not credible. Chinese official documents give no reason to believe that Beijing would be conciliatory on other claims if the United States accommodated China on Taiwan.15 Taipei also claims sovereignty over the Japanese-controlled Senkaku Islands in the East China Sea. Beijing’s legal claim to these islands, which it calls the Diaoyu Islands, heavily relies on the history of the Republic of China and the status of “Taiwan Province.”16 Meanwhile, Taiwan maintains troops and recently upgraded its facilities on Taiping/Itu Aba, the largest naturally occurring feature of the disputed Spratly Islands, where China has been engaged in land reclamation and construction on features it controls. U.S. abandonment of Taiwan would likely make Chinese decisionmakers believe they could strengthen their claims in the East China and South China Seas by coercing Taipei to consolidate its positions with those of Beijing.

#### Second, this causes a China-Japan war over the Senkakus and substantially increases the risk of U.S.-China war — turns the case.

Turton 15 — Michael Turton, writer, blogger, and teacher based in Taichung, Taiwan, author of *The View from Taiwan*—a popular scholarly blog about Taiwanese politics, 2015 (“Hegemonic Warfare Watch: The Case of Charles Glaser Worried,” *The View from Taiwan*—a blog, July 27th, Available Online at https://michaelturton.blogspot.com/2015/07/hegemonic-warfare-watch-case-of-charles.html, Accessed 07-10-2016)

Glaser and others who write from this bubbleverse accept the existence of these territorial disputes without inquiring into their origins. The reason they invariably refrain from doing so is because if they did, it would immediately become obvious that China is engaging in territorial expansion, since Taiwan, the South China Sea islands, and the Senkakus were never historically Chinese areas. Instead, they were claims manufactured after the fall of the Manchu Qing dynasty, when China was redefined in order to expand it out to the borders of the Qing. Hence any reading of these territorial demands as "China's need for security" or some such silliness is Beijing propaganda, plain and simple.

This is crucial because if you read Glaser's paper carefully, there is a yawning gap that totally destroys his thesis. He mentions Taiwan, of course, but he also mentions the Senkakus many times.

Yet, he never mentions that Taiwan and the Senkakus (and Okinawa) are all connected in Chinese territorial demands (the ROC fantasy here, the Xinhua rewrite of history here). Chinese claim that the Senkakus were administered from Taiwan and are part of Taiwan. They cannot be separated into unrelated dispute bubbles the way Glaser treats them.

Thus, this current paper, just like his previous one, creates a bubble world in which there is no connection between China's expansionist claims in the South and East China Seas, and Taiwan. Indeed, the only way you can make the argument that Taiwan should be kissed off is if you pretend that Taiwan is not related to any other goal of Chinese expansionism. Which is rank nonsense.

In the real world, though, Chinese expansionists having been claiming for decades that the Senkakus were administered by the Qing from Taiwan, which makes them Chinese and part of the Taiwan claim. More importantly, it means that the "dispute" over Taiwan cannot be resolved by handing Taiwan over to China because that will simply bring the war over the Senkakus (and Okinawa) that much closer. Glaser learned nothing from criticism of his 2011 piece -- my comments still apply:

Thus, Glaser's position is contradictory: he argues that the US can avoid war by handing 23 million Taiwanese to Beijing and then beefing up its remaining alliance commitments to show we're still serious -- but in the case of Japan, that alliance is committed to defending territories Beijing covets. Not much point in selling out Taiwan to avoid war if you signal you are willing to go to war over the Senkakus and then beef up your forces in order to do just that. And having burned 23 million pro-American allies along with their armed forces, who would believe you are willing to nuke Beijing for a few rocks in the ocean?

It's not just the Senkakus, though. You'd never know from reading Glaser that the ROC government on Taiwan controls Pratas and Taiping Islands in the South China Sea. The Spratlys are mentioned once -- in a footnote to emphasize how small they are (!). The ROC-held islands in the SCS are not mentioned at all.

At present, you cannot hand over Taiwan to China without disposing of these islands, yet China will never accept any disposition of those islands in which it does not get them. Moreover, once you betray the Taiwanese, in addition to betraying Tokyo, you also betray Manila: Chinese expansionists have made noises about Batan Island and Beijing recently conducted exercises in the Bashi Channel. This means that your brilliant war-avoiding strategy brings China into greater conflict with both Philippines and Japan, two nations the US is bound by treaty obligations to defend in wartime.

Oh, and you increase Chinese power in the SCS by handing over key islands to it, making things worse for Vietnam and Malaysia, increasing the chance of war and giving Beijing a better position to wage it from. Oh, and let's not forget, you invite China to think of new expansionist claims, like to Yoniguni and Ishigaki, not far from Taiwan.

And this brilliant argument -- I laugh to use this word -- is from a "realist".

Far from reducing the chance of a clash between Beijing and Washington, the sell-out crowd ensures that there will be one, with China in a far better position, having gotten Taiwan for nothing, while Washington has given up a powerful asset of 23 million people and their armed forces arrayed against Chinese expansionism, for no gain at all.

#### Finally, war over the Senkakus quickly escalates — outweighs and turns the case.

Navarro 16 — Peter Navarro, Professor of Economics and Public Policy at the Merage School of Business at the University of California-Irvine, holds a Ph.D. in Economics and a Masters of Public Administration from Harvard University, 2016 (“Senkaku Suicide Scenarios: China vs. Ameripan,” *Real Clear Defense*, April 1st, Available Online at http://www.realcleardefense.com/articles/2016/04/01/senkaku\_suicide\_scenarios\_china\_vs\_ameripan\_109207.html, Accessed 07-24-2016)

It now may be only a matter of time before an increasingly well-armed People’s Liberation Army attempts to take the Senkaku Islands by force. China calls them the Diaoyutai and claims these Japanese territories in the East China Sea by historical right.

The strategic question is how will America and Japan (“Ameripan”) respond to a Chinese thrust – retreat, bombs and bullets, or embargo? The broader existential question is whether a military response would trigger, Sarajevo-style, a broader World War between the three largest economies on the planet and two reigning Superpowers.

On a personal note, I’ve seen at least one possible future less than 30 miles down the road from where I live in Southern California. At Camp Pendleton, Japanese Defense Forces regularly train with US marines. One of the top war games is defending the Senkakus from a swarming Chinese invader.

Rocks In the Sea?

China doves dismiss the Senkaku Islands as “rocks in the sea” not worth risking the nuking of American cities or Japanese blood. On the surface, this seems right:

The Senkakus are five small, uninhabited volcanic islets with a total land area of less than three square miles. The largest and tallest of the islets is Uotsuri. With an elevation a little higher than the Eiffel Tower -- just over 1200 feet – Uotsuri features a barren, hilly, and beautiful landscape.

The smallest islet is Taishō-tō with a narrow spire-like elevation of about 250 feet and a land area no bigger than the size of about 14 football fields. It is one of two islets, along with the 383-foot tall Kuba, that accounts for the name given to the Senkakus by British sailors – the Pinnacle Islands.

Unsinkable Aircraft Carriers?

There are two very big problems with the “rocks in the sea” critique – one economic, one strategic.

Economically, the UN Law of the Sea Treaty established Exclusive Economic Zones that extend 200 nautical miles in concentric circles around tiny habitable “rocks” like the Senkakus. At stake are not just fertile fishing grounds but also the potential of huge, Persian Gulf-size oil and gas reserves underneath the seabeds surrounding the islands.

Strategically, the Senkaku “rocks” are located about 200 miles east of mainland China, 120 miles northeast of Keelung, Taiwan, and about 100 miles from Ishigaki Island, part of Japan’s Okinawa Prefecture.

Here, China has already brazenly illustrated its ability to transform tiny specks of reefs and shoals in the South China Sea into heavily armed, cruise-missile equipped garrisons and command centers replete with 10,000-foot runways. In the hands and bulldozers of Beijing, the relatively far larger Senkakus would pose a significant increased threat both to Taiwan and Japan’s Okinawan territories.

Attack Scenarios

In the Clausewitz scenario, China’s military grows against the backdrop of a shrinking US naval fleet and a withering Japanese economy. At some point – as early as 2020 – China may seize its “war by algebra” moment and simply overpower Ameripan forces.

In a “wag the dog” scenario, President Xi Jinping and the Communist Party are about to be engulfed by a sea of domestic discontent over economic stagnation or environmental pollution or Orwellian repression. To rally support, Xi orders a full-scale invasion – think Argentina trying to grab the Falklands from Britain here, with a far greater Chinese chance of success.

In a “people’s war at sea” scenario, Beijing recruits Chinese commercial fishing vessels to get close to the islands and lay strings of mines. China has one of the biggest mine arsenals in the world and regularly trains its commercial fisherman to carry mines on behalf of the motherland.

And how about the “flotilla” scenario? Private Chinese citizens whipped into a nationalist frenzy advance in a flotilla of “freedom boats,” land in the dead of night on Uotsuri, and plant the Chinese flag. All Hell breaks loose on social media and both Beijing and Tokyo are faced with rocks in the sea and hard place choices.

And by the way, to measure Chinese nationalism on the “crazy scale,” it’s off the charts. In 2012, violent Senkaku demonstrations erupted in over a hundred Chinese cities. One protester wrote: “Even if China is a graveyard, still need to kill all Japanese. Even if no grass grows in China, still need to recover Diaoyu Islands.”

America Dragged Into War?

Would America have Japan’s back in a Senkaku Suicide Scenario as it is required to do by treaty? Then Secretary of State Hillary Clinton said firmly in 2010: “the [Senkaku] islands are part of our mutual treaty obligations.” Secretaries of State Chuck Hagel and John Kerry reiterated that pledge. Says Heritage Foundation scholar Dean Cheng:

The United States has consistently said that the US-Japan mutual security relationship covers the Senkakus because those islands are under the administrative control of Japan; and I believe that, as with other treaty commitments, any decision to walk away from that commitment will have devastating consequences.

So if I were to be asked to the White House to talk to the chief executive in a situation where the Chinese have seized the Senkakus, I would be advising the President that he must stand firm with Tokyo, make very clear to Beijing that this would not be allowed to stand, and to extend support, including weapons, including American forces, to the aid of the self-defense forces, in retaking those islands.

Counterattack Scenarios

Professor Lyle Goldstein of the US Naval War College says the US should do absolutely nothing.

Those are rocks. They're not important to anyone. They're not important to Japan. They're not important to China. They're certainly not important to the United States.

If, however, the US stays on the sidelines, a war between Japan and China could quickly go nuclear. Japanese forces, outnumbered though it may be, are quite capable and may, in the early stages of any war, get the upper hand. At that point, national pride – and perhaps survival of the Chinese Communist Party – would likely dictate China bombing Tokyo.

As a second scenario, Colonel T.X. Hammes of National Defense University suggests using the same kind of thermobaric weapons Russia has used to great effect in both Chechnya and Syria. Explains Hammes in this exchange with the interviewer:

HAMMES: A thermobaric weapon is a weapon that spreads a fuel air mixture, and it disseminates fuel air all the way over, and then it detonates. So it goes into the holes in the ground, you breathe it in, and then it detonates and by over pressure, it kills. The Russians used thermobarics in Chechnya – hand-held RPG type thermobarics. They're a devastating weapon.

INTERVIEWER: So if we wipe out every Chinese soldier on the islands, what happens on the mainland in terms of their nationalism?

HAMMES: Well, that's the problem. Nationalism will get going. There's, no accounting for stupidity, so you have to be prepared to fight

Here’s still a third “embargo” response option offered up by Brookings Institution scholar Michael O’Hanlon: Japanese and US naval and air forces establish a perimeter and starve out the invaders.

Would today’s China allow itself to be so intimidated? The more likely response is some form of escalatory behavior, e.g., a barrage of antiship ballistic missiles raining down on Japanese and US surface ship or ultra-quiet Russian-designed Chinese subs launching torpedoes and cruise missiles.

The Broader Tripwire Point

There are any number of scenarios in which China might attack the Senkakus. There are an equal number of scenarios where such an attack quickly escalates into something of far more significance.

### 1NC — Democracy DA

#### First/next off is the Democracy DA.

#### First, U.S. democracy promotion in the Asia-Pacific is successful now, but backsliding remains possible — U.S. credibility is key.

Busby and Carouso 15 — Scott Busby, Deputy Assistant Secretary, Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor, previously Director for Human Rights on the National Security Council in the White House, and James Carouso, Acting Deputy Assistant Secretary for Maritime and Mainland Southeast Asian Affairs, Bureau of East Asian and Pacific Affairs, previously Counselor for Economic Affairs at the U.S. Embassy in Jakarta, 2015 (“Democracy in Southeast Asia”, US Department of State, November 19th, Available Online at <http://www.state.gov/j/drl/rls/rm/2015/249788.htm>, Accessed on 07-01-2016, KG)

Viewed from a long-term perspective, we can say that significantly more people in Southeast Asia are living in democracies than 30 years ago, although we of course want to see more and faster progress, and millions still live under repressive and authoritarian governments. In some countries we have seen recent backsliding in democratic governance and respect for human rights. In Southeast Asia and around the world, we remain committed to the notion that effective and accountable governance, the rule of law, and respect for human rights provide the foundation for long-term political stability and sustainable development. Rebalance to Asia and the Pacific Region The U.S. government’s “rebalance” to Asia and the Pacific region recognizes that our future prosperity and security are inextricably tied to the region. Over the past three decades, the region has experienced an unprecedented period of prosperity, lifting hundreds of millions out of extreme poverty. A growing middle class has expanded business and trade opportunities and driven reciprocal growth in countries around the world, including the United States. The rebalance reflects the importance we place on our economic, security, public diplomacy, and strategic engagement in Asia and the Pacific region, and our strong support for advancing democracy, good governance, justice, and human rights. These goals are mutually reinforcing elements of a unified strategy that, at its core, is about strengthening our relationships with the people of the region and their governments. It is about protecting and promoting fundamental human rights, such as the freedoms of expression, association and assembly, all prerequisites to a “government by the people.” It is about citizens having the ability to choose their own leaders and influence the decisions that affect their lives, because solutions to the challenges facing Asia need to come from the bottom up, not the top down. Promoting democracy and human rights, in Asia and around the world, is the right thing to do. It also strengthens our strategic presence and advances our strategic interests. It helps build more stable societies by encouraging governments to give people peaceful outlets for expressing themselves and to seek the most enduring and reliable source of legitimacy: the consent of the governed. It supports our economic goals by promoting laws and institutions that secure property rights, enforce contracts, and fight corruption. It empowers citizens to hold their governments accountable on issues like protecting the environment and ensuring product safety, which are important to the health and well-being of our own people. It aligns American leadership with the aspirations of everyday people in the region. By the same token, our strategic presence in Asia—our alliances, our trade agreements, our development initiatives and partnerships, our ability to provide security and reassurance to our friends— enables us to promote democracy and human rights more effectively. Our partners in the region are more likely to work with us on these issues if they know that the United States remains committed to maintaining our leadership in the region and that we will stand by them in moments of need. To advance the vision we share with so many of the region’s people, we must be present and principled at the same time. Advancing Democracy: Civil Society, Transparent and Responsive Governance, and Access to Information As we continue to deepen our engagement in Asia and the Pacific region, the promotion of democracy, human rights, and good governance is front and center—in private and public diplomacy. Our engagement is focused in three key areas: strengthening civil society, encouraging transparent and accountable governance, and increasing access to information. In his remarks before the UN General Assembly in September, President Obama noted, “When civil society thrives, communities can solve problems that governments cannot necessarily solve alone.” History has shown that durable change is most likely to come from within. That means to be truly effective, we must stand up for civil society, give civil society actors a lifeline of support when they need it, and help preserve space for them to make the case for change in their own societies. Southeast Asia is home to a vibrant and active civil society that we work closely with through initiatives like the Young Southeast Asian Leaders Initiative. Countries like Indonesia, the Philippines, and Malaysia have some of the most vibrant and diverse civil society organizations in the world. However, the region has not been immune to a worldwide trend of government restrictions on civil society. One example is Thailand, where the military regime has restricted civil liberties since seizing power in May 2014. Next door, the Cambodian government has also pushed through legislation restricting the ability of nongovernmental organizations to operate freely. Some have argued that these crackdowns are a rejection of democracy, but in fact, these repressive policies are the result of democracy’s powerful appeal. Democratic movements raise citizens’ expectations and empower them to demand basic rights. Last year, Indonesia hosted the largest single-day elections in the world. During that election, citizen-activists built a web app that crowd-sourced a parallel vote tally and helped increase the Indonesian electorate’s confidence in that historic day. Similarly, the recent elections in Burma enjoyed the participation of the vast majority of Burma’s citizens, marking another important step in its democratic transition. In some Southeast Asian countries, new tools have enabled governments to be more open and to make data about governance more accessible, which has resulted in a better informed and empowered citizenry. And we know that open and transparent government is the best route to advancing both democracy and development. For example, in the Philippines, the government required grassroots participation in the planning and budgeting of poverty-reduction programs in every one of its municipal and provincial governments. That requirement has resulted not only in greater citizen involvement in the creation, implementation and evaluation of programs, but also bettered tailored policies for communities. The Philippines undertook this initiative as a founding member of the Open Government Partnership (OGP)—a multilateral initiative that includes governments and civil society from around the world working together on good governance reforms. The United States was also a founding member of this effort as was Indonesia, which chaired the OGP in 2014. This partnership allows the U.S. government to promote democracy and good governance through practical cooperation with governments such as the Philippines and Indonesia to improve governance by making it more open and more transparent. We will continue to push to expand participation in the OGP in Southeast Asia. OGP members are required to construct national action plans in consultation with civil society and to agree upon reforms in the areas of transparency, anticorruption, good governance, and citizen participation. This structure ensures that governments make transparent aspects of their decision-making and activity, and it preserves an open society in which citizens are free to scrutinize and criticize government and identify opportunities for improvement. This can be an uncomfortable process for governments, but it is a critical piece of what makes it possible for citizens to hold their leaders accountable. As we push for this government-to-government cooperation, we also realize that initiatives like OGP only work if they are supported by an open and active civil society that is able to express itself openly and share information freely. This is why access to information is the third element in our democracy promotion strategy. In Southeast Asia, we have seen explosive growth in Internet access and usage, sometimes catching governments in the region by surprise, even, as they grapple with how to manage this flow of information. We believe access to information and freedom of expression are important indicators of a democracy’s health. A free and open Internet as well as an independent press are instrumental in rooting out corruption and increasing government accountability. At the same time, we also are troubled by what appears to be backsliding in recent months with respect to restrictions on both traditional and online media around the world, including in the region. In some countries, defamation and national security laws have been used to harass, intimidate and silence journalists and bloggers. In Malaysia, officials have tightened restrictions on freedom of expression, and government critics are now victims of charges under Malaysia’s Sedition Laws, which Prime Minister Najib publicly committed to eliminating only three years ago. And in countries like Vietnam—which has an impressive level of Internet penetration and has made modest improvement in human rights over the last few years—many journalists and online activists continue to suffer harassment or remain in prison for peacefully expressing their views. Civil society, government transparency, and access to information are a three-legged stool upon which strong democracies are built. In addition to our diplomatic efforts to bolster these foundations, we also provide grass-roots, results-oriented programming. Across the region, we support dozens of innovative programs that increase the effectiveness of local civil society organizations to improve their communities on their terms. Our programs have trained labor activists, brought human rights principles to security forces, strengthened election mechanisms, and enabled citizen journalists to connect, share, and publish their work. Our rapid response mechanisms have enabled us to provide immediate relief and help activists and civil society leaders and their organizations when their governments respond negatively to their insisting on having a voice in the decisions that most affect their lives.

#### Second, the plan crushes U.S. democracy promotion — abandoning Taiwan decimates American credibility.

Roy 12 — Denny Roy, Senior Fellow and Supervisor of the POSCO Fellowship Program at the East-West Center—a U.S.-based institution for public diplomacy in the Asia Pacific region, former Professor at the Asia-Pacific Center for Security Studies in Honolulu, former Faculty Member in the National Security Affairs Department at the Naval Postgraduate School, former Research Fellow with the Strategic and Defence Studies Centre at the Australian National University in Canberra, holds a Ph.D. in Political Science from the University of Chicago, 2012 (“Why the U.S. shouldn't abandon Taiwan,” *Time*, December 6th, Available Online at http://globalpublicsquare.blogs.cnn.com/2012/12/06/why-the-u-s-shouldnt-abandon-taiwan/, Accessed 06-28-2016)

The argument for abandoning Taiwan may be superficially appealing in its cold-blooded logic. But it is terribly wrong.

U.S. foreign policy has always been a reflection of American principles along with strategic and economic interests. Taiwan is a legitimate democracy, one with a long history of close friendship with the United States, threatened by a large authoritarian state demanding a political annexation that Taiwan’s people clearly do not want. If Americans will not stand by Taiwan, the principled component of U.S. foreign policy is dead.

But abandoning Taiwan would not be merely immoral. Washington has economic, political and strategic interests in promoting democracy worldwide. In general, democratic governments make better international citizens than authoritarian states and are more likely to be partners than adversaries in America’s pursuit of its global agenda. Abandoning Taiwan would not only reduce the democratic world in concrete terms by throwing a community of 23 million people back over the barbed-wire fence. It would also signal that America is no longer serious about promoting democratization elsewhere.

#### Finally, effective democracy promotion is crucial to global stability — it solves the root cause of war and other existential threats.

Miller 12 — Paul D. Miller, Assistant Professor in the Department of Regional and Analytical Studies at the College of International Security Affairs at the National Defense University, serves as an Officer in the U.S. Army Reserve and was deployed to Afghanistan in 2002, served as Director for Afghanistan on the National Security Council from 2007 to 2009, served as a political analyst for the Central Intelligence Agency specializing in South Asia, holds a Masters in Public Policy from the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University and a Ph.D. in International Relations from Georgetown University, 2012 (“American Grand Strategy and the Democratic Peace,” *Survival: Global Politics and Strategy*, Volume 54, Issue 2, Available Online to Subscribing Institutions via Taylor & Francis Online)

A grand strategy that includes promoting the democratic peace has much to recommend it. The historical evidence seems convincing: established democracies rarely, if ever, fight one another. The more states that adopt democracy, the fewer there are that are likely to become enemies of the United States. Additionally, as summarised by Sean M. Lynn Jones, editor of International Security, democracy has a number of other benefits directly helpful for US national security. Democracies are less likely to use violence against their own people and therefore less likely to draw in outside intervention. They rarely sponsor international terrorism. Democracies have better long-run economic prospects, rarely experience famine, and produce fewer refugees than non-democracies, which means they require less international aid, are more likely to trade with and invest in the United States, and are more likely to become centres of innovation and productivity.27

Scholars have offered a range of reasons why democracies rarely fight one another, which collectively suggest that the benefits of democracy are not ephemeral accidents but permanent features of this form of government. Citizens of democracies believe they share values with other democracies, and thus are slower to see other democracies as potential enemies or combatants. Democracy enforces peaceful dispute-resolution domestically, a norm that democratic leaders may simply transplant to the international arena, especially in disputes with other democracies. Institutional considerations are also relevant. Democracies typically constrain the government's war powers through civilian control and checks and balances, making it harder to launch a war. The public, which pays the cost of war in a democracy, is likely to be more selective about the wars it chooses to fight. And democracies are unable to control information about themselves because of the freedoms of speech and press, which decreases misperceptions that could lead to war and, in a militarised dispute, improves the credibility of a democracy's military threats and hence decreases opponents' willingness to gamble on war.28

Promoting democracy also fits naturally with other long-standing components of US grand strategy. Washington has, for example, long sought to prevent the rise of a hostile hegemon in strategically important areas of the world – especially Europe or East Asia – by maintaining a favourable balance of power through military dominance and a network of allies. Preventing hegemony has rightly animated US policy for generations, from its tack-andweave between Britain and France from 1776 to 1815 to its involvement in both World Wars and the Cold War. A commitment to democracy is, in a sense, the corollary to resistance to hegemony, as democratic systems are defined by a diffusion of power among many actors, thus limiting the chances for tyranny. The same holds internationally: the United States should work to keep power diffused among many sovereign states and international organisations to prevent the rise of a hostile, coercive hegemon. Regimes committed to those ideals at home are more likely to apply them abroad, while autocracies are more likely to seek to expand their power at others' expense, both domestically and internationally. The growth of democracy abroad alters the balance of power in the United States' favour.

Finally, promoting democracy is well suited to one of the major challenges of the twenty-first century: state failure and its attendant threats. The United States can and should respond to the rising tide of state failure across the world with democratic peace-building interventions. The consequences of state failure and anarchy across much of the world – including the rise of terrorist groups, organised crime, drug cartels, human traffickers, nuclear smugglers, pandemic disease and piracy – collectively erode global stability and liberalism and raise the cost of US leadership. Effective democratic peace-building (meaning peace-building that is well armed, well funded and well planned) is the answer to this challenge. When successful, it holds out the promise not just of treating these various symptoms, but of addressing the disease. The alternative is to play global Whack-a-Mole with the crisis du jour, sniping pirates one day, drone-bombing terrorists or barricading drug cartels into narco-statelets the next. Such policy is reactive, defensive and events-driven, the opposite of what strategy is supposed to be. A grand strategy would complement these immediate, short-term actions to stave off threats with longer-term efforts to address the underlying challenges to stability and democracy.

### 1NC — Threaten Normalization CP

#### First/next off is the Threaten Normalization Counterplan.

#### The United States federal government should threaten to normalize relations with Taiwan if the People’s Republic of China does not reverse its territorial expansion in the South China Sea.

#### U.S. pressure is the only way to stop China’s expansionism. The counterplan solves the nuclear war advantage without accommodating China.

Bolton 16 — John R. Bolton, Senior Fellow at the American Enterprise Institute, former U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations, former Under Secretary of State for Arms Control and International Security and Assistant Secretary for International Organization Affairs at the U.S. Department of State, holds a J.D. from Yale Law School, 2016 (“The U.S. Can Play a ‘Taiwan Card’,” *Wall Street Journal*, January 17th, Available Online at <http://www.wsj.com/articles/the-u-s-can-play-a-taiwan-card-1453053872>, Accessed 07-16-2016)

Repeatedly met with passivity from Washington and impotence from the region, Beijing has declared much of the South China Sea a Chinese province, designated a provincial capital, and is creating not merely “facts on the ground” but the ground itself, in the form of artificial islands on which it is constructing air and naval bases.

Predictably, China’s partisans in the West contend that Beijing’s current economic troubles mean Xi Jinping won’t move first to provoke trouble with Ms. Tsai’s administration in Taipei. But Beijing’s ongoing reckoning with economic reality doesn’t necessarily mean it will be less assertive internationally. Authoritarian governments confronted with domestic problems have historically sought to distract their citizens by rallying nationalistic support against foreign adversaries. Who better to blame for China’s economic crash than the U.S. and pesky Taiwan?

How Ms. Tsai would react to Mr. Xi’s provocations remains unknown. Of course China would prefer for Taiwan to fall into its lap like a ripe fruit, with its economic infrastructure and productivity intact, rather than to risk hostilities over the island. But in the period to come Beijing must consider not merely a less pliant Taiwanese government, but also America’s next president.

Beijing knows that the weak, inattentive President Barack Obama will be in office for only one more year. Whereas even Bill Clinton ordered U.S. carrier battle groups to Taiwan’s aid in the 1996 cross-Strait crisis, few Americans today believe that Mr. Obama would do the same.

How could Beijing’s leadership not draw the same conclusion? Washington’s current unwillingness to stand firm against Chinese belligerence in Asian waters only encourages Beijing to act before Jan. 20, 2017, perhaps especially before Ms. Tsai is inaugurated in four months. For now observers can only monitor East Asia’s geopolitical space, involving not just Taiwan but also the South and East China seas, until America’s inauguration day, praying that the Asian situation is not hopeless by then.

For a new U.S. president willing to act boldly, there are opportunities to halt and then reverse China’s seemingly inexorable march toward hegemony in East Asia. Playing the “China card” in the Nixon Administration made sense at the time, but the reflexive, near-addictive adherence to pro-China policies since has become unwise and increasingly risky as Beijing’s isolation and backwardness have diminished.

An alternative now would be to play the “Taiwan card” against China. America should insist that China reverse its territorial acquisitiveness, including abandoning its South China Sea bases and undoing the ecological damage its construction has caused. China is free to continue asserting its territorial claims diplomatically, but until they are peacefully resolved with its near neighbors, they and the U.S. are likewise free to ignore such claims in their entirety.

If Beijing isn’t willing to back down, America has a diplomatic ladder of escalation that would compel Beijing’s attention. The new U.S. administration could start with receiving Taiwanese diplomats officially at the State Department; upgrading the status of U.S. representation in Taipei from a private “institute” to an official diplomatic mission; inviting Taiwan’s president to travel officially to America; allowing the most senior U.S. officials to visit Taiwan to transact government business; and ultimately restoring full diplomatic recognition.

Beijing’s leaders would be appalled by this approach, as the U.S. is appalled by their maritime territorial aggression. China must understand that creating so-called provinces risks causing itself to lose control, perhaps forever, of another so-called province. Even were China to act more responsibly in nearby waters, of course, Taiwan’s fate would still be for its people to decide.

Too many foreigners continue echoing Beijing’s view that Taiwan is a problem only resolvable by uniting the island and the mainland as “one China.” But Taiwan’s freedom isn’t a problem. It is an inspiration. Let Beijing contemplate that fact on the ground.

### 1NC — Debt Condition CP

#### First/next off is the Debt Condition Counterplan.

#### The United States federal government should negotiate a grand bargain with the People’s Republic of China by offering to end its commitment to defend Taiwan against Chinese aggression in return for China peacefully resolving its maritime and land disputes in the South China and East China Seas, officially accepting the United States’ long-term military security role in East Asia, and writing off the American debt currently held by China.

#### First, the counterplan adds a condition that solves otherwise-unsustainable U.S. debt. China says “yes.”

Kane 11 — Paul V. Kane, former Research Fellow in the International Security Program at the Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University, former Active Duty Marine who served in Iraq, 2011 (“To Save Our Economy, Ditch Taiwan,” *New York Times*, November 10th, Available Online at <http://www.nytimes.com/2011/11/11/opinion/to-save-our-economy-ditch-taiwan.html?_r=0>, Accessed 07-22-2016)

With a single bold act, President Obama could correct the country’s course, help assure his re-election, and preserve our children’s future.

He needs to redefine America’s mindset about national security away from the old defense mentality that American power derives predominantly from our military might, rather than from the strength, agility and competitiveness of our economy. He should make it clear that today American jobs and wealth matter more than military prowess.

As Adm. Mike Mullen, then chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, declared last year, “The most significant threat to our national security is our debt.”

There are dozens of initiatives President Obama could undertake to strengthen our economic security. Here is one: He should enter into closed-door negotiations with Chinese leaders to write off the $1.14 trillion of American debt currently held by China in exchange for a deal to end American military assistance and arms sales to Taiwan and terminate the current United States-Taiwan defense arrangement by 2015.

This would be a most precious prize to the cautious men in Beijing, one they would give dearly to achieve. After all, our relationship with Taiwan, as revised in 1979, is a vestige of the cold war.

Today, America has little strategic interest in Taiwan, which is gradually integrating with China economically by investing in and forming joint ventures with mainland Chinese firms. The island’s absorption into mainland China is inevitable.

But the status quo is dangerous; if Taiwanese nationalist politicians decided to declare independence or if Beijing’s hawks tired of waiting for integration and moved to take Taiwan by force, America could suddenly be drawn into a multitrillion-dollar war.

There will be “China hawks” who denounce any deal on Taiwan as American capitulation, but their fear of a Red China menacing Asia is anachronistic. Portraying the United States as a democratic Athens threatened by China’s autocratic Sparta makes for sensational imagery, but nothing could be further from reality.

The battle today is between competing balance sheets, and it is fought in board rooms; it is not a geopolitical struggle to militarily or ideologically “dominate” the Pacific.

In fact, China and the United States have interlocking economic interests. China’s greatest military asset is actually the United States Navy, which keeps the sea lanes safe for China’s resources and products to flow freely.

China would want a deal on Taiwan for several reasons. First, Taiwan is Beijing’s unspoken but hard-to-hide top priority for symbolic and strategic reasons; only access to water and energy mean more to Chinese leaders.

Second, a deal would open a clearer path for the gradual, orderly integration of Taiwan into China.

Third, it would undermine hard-line militarists who use the Taiwan issue to stoke nationalist flames, sideline pro-Western technocrats and extract larger military budgets. And finally, it would save China the considerable sums it has been spending on a vast military buildup.

Jeffrey Lewis, an East Asia expert at the Monterey Institute of International Studies, estimated that one-fourth to one-third of China’s defense spending goes to forces in the vicinity of Taiwan — at a cost of $30 billion to $50 billion a year. A deal for the resolution of Taiwan’s status could save China $500 billion in defense spending by 2020 and allow Beijing to break even by 2030, while reducing America’s debt and serving our broader economic interests.

The Chinese leadership would be startled — for a change — if the United States were to adopt such a savvy negotiating posture. Beyond reducing our debt, a Taiwan deal could pressure Beijing to end its political and economic support for pariah states like Iran, North Korea and Syria and to exert a moderating influence over an unstable Pakistan. It would be a game changer.

The deal would eliminate almost 10 percent of our national debt without raising taxes or cutting spending; it would redirect American foreign policy away from dated cold-war-era entanglements and toward our contemporary economic and strategic interests; and it would eliminate the risk of involvement in a costly war with China.

Critics will call this proposal impractical, even absurd. They will say it doesn’t have a prayer of passing Congress, and doesn’t acknowledge political realities. They might be right — today.

But by pursuing this agenda, Mr. Obama would change the calculus and political reality. And Congress should see a deal with China as an opportunity to make itself credible again.

Debt is not in itself bad, when managed, but today’s unsustainable debt will suffocate our economy, our democracy and our children’s futures.

By tackling the issue of Taiwan, Mr. Obama could address much of what ails him today, sending a message of bold foreign policy thinking and fiscal responsibility that would benefit every citizen and be understood by every voter.

#### Second, unsustainable debt will collapse U.S. hegemony and spark great power conflict — the net-benefit turns the case.

Khalilzad 11 — Zalmay Khalilzad, Counselor at the Center for Strategic and International Studies, served as the United States ambassador to Afghanistan, Iraq, and the United Nations during the presidency of George W. Bush, served as the director of policy planning at the Defense Department during the Presidency of George H.W. Bush, holds a Ph.D. from the University of Chicago, 2011 (“The Economy and National Security,” *National Review*, February 8th, Available Online at http://www.nationalreview.com/articles/print/259024, Accessed 02-08-2011)

Today, economic and fiscal trends pose the most severe long-term threat to the United States’ position as global leader. While the United States suffers from fiscal imbalances and low economic growth, the economies of rival powers are developing rapidly. The continuation of these two trends could lead to a shift from American primacy toward a multi-polar global system, leading in turn to increased geopolitical rivalry and even war among the great powers.

The current recession is the result of a deep financial crisis, not a mere fluctuation in the business cycle. Recovery is likely to be protracted. The crisis was preceded by the buildup over two decades of enormous amounts of debt throughout the U.S. economy — ultimately totaling almost 350 percent of GDP — and the development of credit-fueled asset bubbles, particularly in the housing sector. When the bubbles burst, huge amounts of wealth were destroyed, and unemployment rose to over 10 percent. The decline of tax revenues and massive countercyclical spending put the U.S. government on an unsustainable fiscal path. Publicly held national debt rose from 38 to over 60 percent of GDP in three years.

Without faster economic growth and actions to reduce deficits, publicly held national debt is projected to reach dangerous proportions. If interest rates were to rise significantly, annual interest payments — which already are larger than the defense budget — would crowd out other spending or require substantial tax increases that would undercut economic growth. Even worse, if unanticipated events trigger what economists call a “sudden stop” in credit markets for U.S. debt, the United States would be unable to roll over its outstanding obligations, precipitating a sovereign-debt crisis that would almost certainly compel a radical retrenchment of the United States internationally.

Such scenarios would reshape the international order. It was the economic devastation of Britain and France during World War II, as well as the rise of other powers, that led both countries to relinquish their empires. In the late 1960s, British leaders concluded that they lacked the economic capacity to maintain a presence “east of Suez.” Soviet economic weakness, which crystallized under Gorbachev, contributed to their decisions to withdraw from Afghanistan, abandon Communist regimes in Eastern Europe, and allow the Soviet Union to fragment. If the U.S. debt problem goes critical, the United States would be compelled to retrench, reducing its military spending and shedding international commitments.

We face this domestic challenge while other major powers are experiencing rapid economic growth. Even though countries such as China, India, and Brazil have profound political, social, demographic, and economic problems, their economies are growing faster than ours, and this could alter the global distribution of power. These trends could in the long term produce a multi-polar world. If U.S. policymakers fail to act and other powers continue to grow, it is not a question of whether but when a new international order will emerge. The closing of the gap between the United States and its rivals could intensify geopolitical competition among major powers, increase incentives for local powers to play major powers against one another, and undercut our will to preclude or respond to international crises because of the higher risk of escalation.

The stakes are high. In modern history, the longest period of peace among the great powers has been the era of U.S. leadership. By contrast, multi-polar systems have been unstable, with their competitive dynamics resulting in frequent crises and major wars among the great powers. Failures of multi-polar international systems produced both world wars.

American retrenchment could have devastating consequences. Without an American security blanket, regional powers could rearm in an attempt to balance against emerging threats. Under this scenario, there would be a heightened possibility of arms races, miscalculation, or other crises spiraling into all-out conflict. Alternatively, in seeking to accommodate the stronger powers, weaker powers may shift their geopolitical posture away from the United States. Either way, hostile states would be emboldened to make aggressive moves in their regions.

As rival powers rise, Asia in particular is likely to emerge as a zone of great-power competition. Beijing’s economic rise has enabled a dramatic military buildup focused on acquisitions of naval, cruise, and ballistic missiles, long-range stealth aircraft, and anti-satellite capabilities. China’s strategic modernization is aimed, ultimately, at denying the United States access to the seas around China. Even as cooperative economic ties in the region have grown, China’s expansive territorial claims — and provocative statements and actions following crises in Korea and incidents at sea — have roiled its relations with South Korea, Japan, India, and Southeast Asian states. Still, the United States is the most significant barrier facing Chinese hegemony and aggression.

Given the risks, the United States must focus on restoring its economic and fiscal condition while checking and managing the rise of potential adversarial regional powers such as China. While we face significant challenges, the U.S. economy still accounts for over 20 percent of the world’s GDP. American institutions — particularly those providing enforceable rule of law — set it apart from all the rising powers. Social cohesion underwrites political stability. U.S. demographic trends are healthier than those of any other developed country. A culture of innovation, excellent institutions of higher education, and a vital sector of small and medium-sized enterprises propel the U.S. economy in ways difficult to quantify. Historically, Americans have responded pragmatically, and sometimes through trial and error, to work our way through the kind of crisis that we face today.

The policy question is how to enhance economic growth and employment while cutting discretionary spending in the near term and curbing the growth of entitlement spending in the out years. Republican members of Congress have outlined a plan. Several think tanks and commissions, including President Obama’s debt commission, have done so as well. Some consensus exists on measures to pare back the recent increases in domestic spending, restrain future growth in defense spending, and reform the tax code (by reducing tax expenditures while lowering individual and corporate rates). These are promising options.

The key remaining question is whether the president and leaders of both parties on Capitol Hill have the will to act and the skill to fashion bipartisan solutions. Whether we take the needed actions is a choice, however difficult it might be. It is clearly within our capacity to put our economy on a better trajectory. In garnering political support for cutbacks, the president and members of Congress should point not only to the domestic consequences of inaction — but also to the geopolitical implications.

As the United States gets its economic and fiscal house in order, it should take steps to prevent a flare-up in Asia. The United States can do so by signaling that its domestic challenges will not impede its intentions to check Chinese expansionism. This can be done in cost-efficient ways.

While China’s economic rise enables its military modernization and international assertiveness, it also frightens rival powers. The Obama administration has wisely moved to strengthen relations with allies and potential partners in the region but more can be done.

Some Chinese policies encourage other parties to join with the United States, and the U.S. should not let these opportunities pass. China’s military assertiveness should enable security cooperation with countries on China’s periphery — particularly Japan, India, and Vietnam — in ways that complicate Beijing’s strategic calculus. China’s mercantilist policies and currency manipulation — which harm developing states both in East Asia and elsewhere — should be used to fashion a coalition in favor of a more balanced trade system. Since Beijing’s over-the-top reaction to the awarding of the Nobel Peace Prize to a Chinese democracy activist alienated European leaders, highlighting human-rights questions would not only draw supporters from nearby countries but also embolden reformers within China.

Since the end of the Cold War, a stable economic and financial condition at home has enabled America to have an expansive role in the world. Today we can no longer take this for granted. Unless we get our economic house in order, there is a risk that domestic stagnation in combination with the rise of rival powers will undermine our ability to deal with growing international problems. Regional hegemons in Asia could seize the moment, leading the world toward a new, dangerous era of multi-polarity.

### 1NC — Nuclear War Advantage

#### 1. No War — China won’t sacrifice its economy to annex Taiwan.

Cole 15 — J. Michael Cole, Associate Researcher at the French Centre for Research on Contemporary China, Senior Non-Resident Fellow at the China Policy Institute at the University of Nottingham, China Correspondent for *Jane's Defence Weekly*, Senior Member and Editor in Chief at the Thinking Taiwan Foundation—a Taiwanese English-language publication founded by current Taiwanese President Dr. Tsai Ing-wen that provides nonpartisan analysis and commentary, former Deputy News Chief and Reporter for the *Taipei Times*, former Analyst with the Canadian Security Intelligence Service, holds a Master’s in War Studies from the Royal Military College of Canada, 2015 (“If the Unthinkable Occurred: America Should Stand Up to China over Taiwan,” *The National Interest*, May 7th, Available Online at http://nationalinterest.org/feature/if-the-unthinkable-occured-america-should-stand-china-over-12825?page=show, Accessed 06-30-2016)

Ironically, White seems almost convinced that China would be willing to engage in nuclear war over Taiwan, an assumption that is both untested and portrays the leadership in Beijing as a bunch of deranged nihilists. For all its faults, and despite the official rhetoric depicting Taiwan as a “core issue,” it is in my view unlikely that the Chinese Communist Party would unleash its nuclear arsenal over the matter of Taiwan; in fact, I would advance that it is probably unwilling to gamble China’s economy over Taiwan by launching major military operations—all the more so if there is a promise that such a course of action would result in a concerted response on the part of the international community. The logic of deterrence is that it diminishes the likelihood that the international community would be faced with the maximalist options given us by White. (The bluster only works if we believe it—and Beijing wants us to believe it just like the good professor seems to do—as winning without a fight is a foundational element of Chinese military strategy.)

#### 2. [analytical]

#### 3. No DPP Tensions — their authors are scaremongering.

Thim and Turton 16 — Michal Thim, Research Fellow at the Association for International Affairs (Prague), Member of CIMSEC—The Center for International Maritime Security, Asia-Pacific Desk Contributing Analyst for Wikistrat, Postgraduate Student in Taiwan Studies at the School of Contemporary Chinese Studies at the University of Nottingham, previously a Graduate Student in Asia-Pacific Studies and Taiwan Studies at National Chengchi University, holds an M.A. in Political Science from Charles University in Prague, and Michael Turton, writer, blogger, and teacher based in Taichung, Taiwan, author of *The View from Taiwan*—a popular scholarly blog about Taiwanese politics, 2016 (“It's Not Time to Start Worrying About Taiwan,” *The National Interest*, June 23rd, Available Online at <http://nationalinterest.org/blog/the-buzz/its-not-time-start-worrying-about-taiwan-16702?page=show>, Accessed 07-11-2016)

Predictably, the DPP victory in 2016 has led to much scaremongering over the possibility of renewed “tensions.” Frequently cited evidence for “renewed tensions” is the deportation of alleged scammers from Kenya to China, the renewal of ties between Beijing and Gambia, and claims that cross-Strait tourism has been slashed. The first probably had nothing to do with Tsai Ing-wen (Beijing and Nairobi determined how to handle the case a year before she was elected), the second is more likely related to China’s policies in North Africa toward Islamic militancy, and as for the third, the number of Chinese tourists to Taiwan rose in February and again in April. Beijing has threatened to cut negotiations and perhaps not accept visits from DPP officials, purely symbolic moves. Beijing could concretely punish Taiwan, but its available options all harm China and the political and economic relationships Beijing has carefully cultivated in Taipei. It is far more likely that Beijing—like so many other observers—does not know what to do.

#### 4. [analytical]

#### 5. No U.S.-China war — economic ties and deterrence.

Gelb 13 — Leslie H. Gelb, President Emeritus and Board Senior Fellow at the Council on Foreign Relations, former Pulitzer Prize winning journalist and columnist for the *New York Times*, served as Assistant Secretary of State in the Carter Administration and was the recipient of the Distinguished Honor Award—the State Department’s highest honor, served as Director of Policy Planning and Arms Control for International Security Affairs at the Department of Defense where he was the recipient of the Distinguished Service Award—the Defense Department’s highest honor, holds a Ph.D. from Harvard University, 2013 (“Is a military conflict between China and the United States possible in the future?,” *Ask CFR Experts*—a Council on Foreign Relations blog, Question submitted by Josh Wartel from Lake Braddock Secondary School, September 9th, Available Online at <http://www.cfr.org/china/military-conflict-between-china-united-states-possible-future/p31361?cid=rss-fullfeed-is_a_military_conflict_between-090913>, Accessed 09-12-2013)

Is a military conflict between China and the United States possible in the future?

There is almost never a time when people do not worry about war between major powers. The history here is not a happy one. But there are good reasons to expect a better outcome in the 21st century—as long as both sides are alert and careful.

The stakes are much too high for either Beijing or Washington to expect direct military confrontations. Two-way trade and investment are quite high. China holds almost $1.2 trillion in American debt. By contrast, during the Cold War, the United States had virtually no economic ties with the Soviet Union—and both sides still went out of their way to avoid war because of the dangers of escalation into nuclear war. The nightmare of nuclear war hangs over the Chinese-American relationship today. It is clear neither side wants to come anywhere near this ultimate danger.

None of this is to say that both sides will not continue to build up their military capability. No country is adding to its military punch faster than China. But it is still far behind the United States in usable military capability, that is, force that can be applied effectively and decidedly in various situations. Chinese military strength is limited almost entirely to lands and seas bordering its own territory. The United States is still the only global military power.

And it is difficult to see what Beijing might calculate is worth a war or even the risk of war. It has boundary disputes with Vietnam, the Philippines and others in the South China Sea, and with Japan up north. Troubles should be expected there, and China will certainly be testing Washington's will in both places. Chinese leaders, however, continue to focus on their nation's economic development, and war would certainly set that back.

#### 6. [analytical]

#### 7. No Nuclear Escalation — deterrence and strategic restraint.

Thim 12 — Michal Thim, Research Fellow at the Association for International Affairs (Prague), Member of CIMSEC—The Center for International Maritime Security, Asia-Pacific Desk Contributing Analyst for Wikistrat, Postgraduate Student in Taiwan Studies at the School of Contemporary Chinese Studies at the University of Nottingham, previously a Graduate Student in Asia-Pacific Studies and Taiwan Studies at National Chengchi University, holds an M.A. in Political Science from Charles University in Prague, 2012 (“Of Peace and Appeasement: Comments on Charles Glaser’s Article, ‘Will China’s Rise Lead To War?’,” *Taiwan In Perspective*—a blog, August 21st, Available Online at https://taiwan-in-perspective.com/2012/08/21/of-peace-and-appeasement-comments-on-charles-glasers-article-will-chinas-rise-lead-to-war/, Accessed 07-10-2016)

The author of this essay strongly opposes the idea that current U.S. commitments may easily lead to full-scale nuclear war. A combination of nuclear and conventional deterrence (developing Taiwan’s A2/AD and missile defense capabilities with U.S. technological assistance), and strategic restraint in the case of a breakout of war (i.e. limiting U.S. response purely to Taiwan’s defense) may keep a potential conflict limited to conventional warfare. Moreover, enhancing Taiwan’s defensive advantages and limiting disadvantages should be enough to make Chinese leaders think twice about choosing a military solution.

#### 8. [analytical]

#### 9. Nuclear war *doesn’t* cause extinction — aff studies are based on faulty models.

Seitz 11 — Russell Seitz, chief scientist at Microbubbles LLC, has published extensively on strategic arms issues, previously worked as a staff scientist in the geophysics division of the C.S. Draper Laboratory at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, visiting scholar and later Associate of Harvard’s Center for International Affairs, served as an Associate of the Center for International Affairs and a Fellow of the Department of Physics at Harvard, 2011 (“Nuclear winter was and is debatable”, Nature 475.37, July 7th, doi:10.1038/475037b, Accessed 06-30-2016, KG)

Alan Robock's contention that there has been no real scientific debate about the 'nuclear winter' concept is itself debatable (Nature 473, 275–276; 2011). This potential climate disaster, popularized in Science in 1983, rested on the output of a one-dimensional model that was later shown to overestimate the smoke a nuclear holocaust might engender. More refined estimates, combined with advanced three-dimensional models (see http://go.nature.com.ezp-prod1.hul.harvard.edu/kss8te), have dramatically reduced the extent and severity of the projected cooling. Despite this, Carl Sagan, who co-authored the 1983 Science paper, went so far as to posit “the extinction of Homo sapiens” (C. Sagan Foreign Affairs 63, 75–77; 1984). Some regarded this apocalyptic prediction as an exercise in mythology. George Rathjens of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology protested: “Nuclear winter is the worst example of the misrepresentation of science to the public in my memory,” (see http://go.nature.com.ezp-prod1.hul.harvard.edu/yujz84) and climatologist Kerry Emanuel observed that the subject had “become notorious for its lack of scientific integrity” (Nature 319, 259; 1986). Robock's single-digit fall in temperature is at odds with the subzero (about −25 °C) continental cooling originally projected for a wide spectrum of nuclear wars. Whereas Sagan predicted darkness at noon from a US–Soviet nuclear conflict, Robock projects global sunlight that is several orders of magnitude brighter for a Pakistan–India conflict — literally the difference between night and day. Since 1983, the projected worst-case cooling has fallen from a Siberian deep freeze spanning 11,000 degree-days Celsius (a measure of the severity of winters) to numbers so unseasonably small as to call the very term 'nuclear winter' into question.

#### 10. Turn: China-Taiwan War. Taiwan won’t go down without a fight.

Roy 12 — Denny Roy, Senior Fellow and Supervisor of the POSCO Fellowship Program at the East-West Center—a U.S.-based institution for public diplomacy in the Asia Pacific region, former Professor at the Asia-Pacific Center for Security Studies in Honolulu, former Faculty Member in the National Security Affairs Department at the Naval Postgraduate School, former Research Fellow with the Strategic and Defence Studies Centre at the Australian National University in Canberra, holds a Ph.D. in Political Science from the University of Chicago, 2012 (“Why the U.S. shouldn't abandon Taiwan,” *Time*, December 6th, Available Online at http://globalpublicsquare.blogs.cnn.com/2012/12/06/why-the-u-s-shouldnt-abandon-taiwan/, Accessed 06-28-2016)

Advocates of abandoning Taiwan may erroneously believe that halting U.S. military and diplomatic support for Taipei would reduce tensions in East Asia. This is certainly what Beijing would have us believe. According to Chinese officials and commentators, U.S. assistance to Taipei is all that stands in the way of peaceful unification, and without it the people of Taiwan would stop resisting and accept Beijing’s terms for unification. This premise, however, ignores an important reality: the main obstacle to unification is not U.S. arms sales, but rather Taiwanese nationalism and the wish of nearly all Taiwan’s people not to be ruled by the Chinese Communist Party. Thus, withdrawal of U.S. support would not necessarily lead to a peaceful resolution of the cross-Strait imbroglio. The opposite outcome is at least as likely. Deterrence against an attack by the People’s Liberation Army would be weakened, while Taiwan’s people may well choose to fight rather than capitulate.

### 1NC — Chinese Opacity Advantage

#### 1. More Info Not Needed — tensions are the result of disagreements, not misunderstandings.

Wang 12 — Yaping Wang, Program Manager of the Asia Program at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, Ph.D. Candidate in International Relations at the University of Virginia, holds an M.A. in International Studies from George Washington University, 2012 (“Is U.S-China Distrust Inevitable?,” *The Diplomat*, May 1st, Available Online at <http://thediplomat.com/2012/05/is-u-s-china-distrust-inevitable/>, Accessed 07-24-2016)

The tone of U.S.-China relations over the past couple of years is arguably encapsulated in two sets of views: those of American commentators and opinion leaders, who claim that China is becoming more assertive or even aggressive, and their Chinese counterparts, who argue that by “pivoting” back to Asia the United States is seeking to constrain China’s rise.

Both sides frequently dispute the others’ analysis. However, a recent Brookings report by Kenneth Lieberthal and Wang Jisi underscores how entrenched these views are, and just how prickly things are ahead of this week’s Strategic and Economic Dialogue in Beijing.

The logic behind the report is that “each side can better manage the issue of strategic distrust if its leaders have confidence that they have an accurate picture of the way the other leadership thinks on the issues that produce this distrust.” Based on this logic, the core of the report tries to understand each side’s point of view, with the aim of increasing mutual understanding. However, if one looks closely into the issues discussed in the report, it’s not clear whether it’s actually a lack of understanding so much as specific disagreements that are at the root of the distrust.

U.S. arms sales to Taiwan provide a good example. The report listed this issue as a source of Chinese suspicion of U.S. intentions, and tries to reduce mistrust by clarifying positions on both sides:

“U.S. weapons sales to Taiwan are viewed in Washington and Taipei as a necessary ingredient for sustaining the confidence of U.S. support in Taipei necessary for Taipei to continue to develop wide ranging cross-Strait relations. Those same sales in Beijing are viewed as confirming American arrogance and determination to interfere in China’s domestic affairs and to prevent peaceful unification from occurring, thereby harming a clearly-articulated Chinese core interest.”

Be that as it may, these positions aren’t unknown to the leaders of both sides. In fact, after regular wrangling over this issue, each side knows very well the other’s thinking. With this in mind, it’s clear mistrust arises not from a lack of understanding, but more from fundamental disagreements intrinsic to the differences between the two countries’ political institutions, value systems and geostrategic interests.

Likewise, China’s concerned response to U.S. reconnaissance activities near China’s coast, and U.S. suspicion of a Chinese anti-access and area denial strategy, is listed in the report as another source of mistrust. Despite claims of freedom of navigation, U.S. surveillance activities along China’s coast are largely driven by its suspicion of China’s military intentions and capabilities. Chinese leaders understand U.S. thinking on this, while U.S. leaders also know that China is sensitive to the security of its coastal areas. These “mutual understandings” can be attested by official and unofficial pronouncements and publications on both sides. Nevertheless, both sides still carry on their potentially provocative activities. This is clearly not because they are unaware of each other’s thinking on the matter, but because they just don’t agree with each other, and both want to change the other’s behavior. In essence, their fundamental interests are at odds.

To be sure, misunderstandings, misconceptions or miscalculations between the two countries do exist and are something that can be worked on. But mistrust between the United States and China, especially when stemming from military and security issues, is inextricably intertwined with history, differences in political systems and values, and sometimes irreconcilable conflicts of interests. Such differences defy resolution unless mindsets or circumstances change. When the report asked the central question of “what array of military deployments and normal operations will permit China to defend its core security interests and at the same time allow America to continue to meet fully its obligations to its allies and friends in the region,” the answer essentially suggests that no middle ground has yet been found.

#### 2. Intentions Impossible To Know — states can’t discern other states’ intentions.

Rosato 15 — Sebastian Rosato, Associate Professor of Political Science at the University of Notre Dame, former Fellow at the Joan B. Kroc Institute for International Peace Studies at the University of Notre Dame and the John M. Olin Institute for Strategic Studies and the Belfer Center for Science and International Affairs at Harvard University, holds a Ph.D. in Political Science from the University of Chicago, 2014/2015 (“The Inscrutable Intentions of Great Powers,” *International Security*, Volume 39, Number 3, Winter, Available Online to Subscribing Institutions via Project Muse)

In this article, I evaluate the major optimistic arguments that great powers can discern the intentions of their peers with confidence.20 One set of arguments holds that states can deduce others’ current intentions from certain domestic characteristics such as their foreign policy goals, ideology, or regime type. Another focuses on behavior and maintains that states can infer current intentions by examining their counterparts’ arms policies, membership in international institutions, or past actions in the security realm.21 A final set of arguments explains why intentions are unlikely to change and thus why current designs are good predictors of future plans.

I conclude that these optimistic claims are unpersuasive. Great powers cannot confidently assess the current intentions of others based on their domestic characteristics or behavior, and they are even less sure when it comes to estimating their peers’ future intentions. This is not to say that states’ features and actions provide no insight into their designs. At best, however, they allow for marginal reductions in uncertainty.

#### 3. [analytical]

#### 4. [card]

#### 5. [analytical]

#### 6. [card]